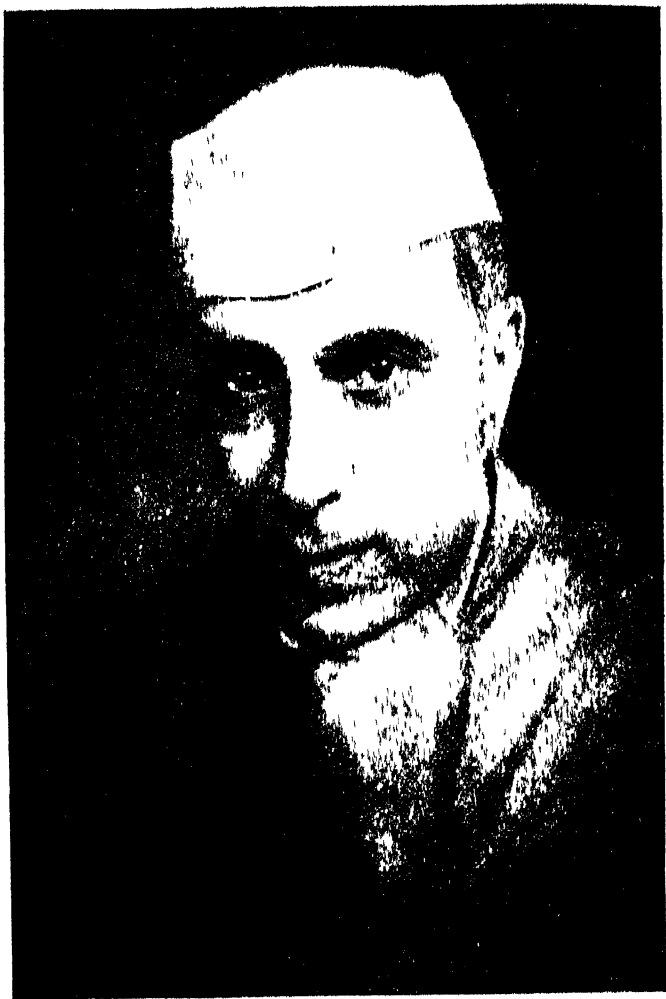


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JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

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Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

From the Painting by V. R. Rao (Royal Academy)

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU:

THE MAN AND HIS IDEAS

BY

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"INVITATION" BY

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"The new order must be based on a recognition of political and economic freedom of all nations subject only to world adjustments mutually agreed upon for common good. Every form of domination or exploitation by one people of another must be eliminated. Full racial equality should be recognized. International and national planning of production, transport, distribution, raising of material and cultural world standards, especially of economically backward nations, are necessary. Production must be for consumption not for profit. Private monopolies and special privileges should be ended."*

Jawaharlal Nehru

*Message read at a meeting of the Progressive Group held on March 10, at the Green's Hotel, when the Author spoke on "Jawaharlal Nehru's Conception of a New World Order."

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INVITATION

A preface or foreword to a book is generally as much an introduction of the author and the theme to the public as it is an invitation to the public to study the subject in the light of the author's standpoint. A study so made may be single pointed but is not exclusive for it suggests several other allied points of view from which the subject and the subject matter may be studied. The author of the preface too in performing his difficult and at times delicate task, brings his own angle of vision to bear upon the study and incidentally, though unwittingly projects himself into the arena. Nor is the subject of portrayal in these pages studied in any limited or circumscribed sphere. If Gandhi—the man and his mission, embraces a whole universe of activities, Jawaharlal—the man and his ideas, likewise cover a wide range of activities spread over the whole universe. But then the difficulty for the introducee or inviter is that he is a contemporary of the subject of study—one who has been in close contact with him—though he has not enjoyed his friendship much less his confidence. This perhaps is less a disqualification than otherwise

in discharging the somewhat embarrassing duty of writing the foreword, because he has never been a recipient of favours from him—much less a suppliant for them. With this background, let me proceed to give a few pencil sketches of Jawaharlal whom I love to call by his abbreviated name, not merely because he hates the prefix Pandit but because the former being a decade older in age as well as a decade senior in public life, I claim the right to address him with a certain endearment.

Shall we now get to grips with the subject? Jawaharlal is an exceptional personage in every way, for there are few who are the sons of *great* men, that have become *great* themselves—and *great* not decades after the demise of the father but *great* before his very eyes, indeed *great* as his very successor, to the Presidentship of the Indian National Congress. When we remember how Jawaharlal received his education in England, we can understand two things in particular, namely his wide outlook, though of the western type, and his partiality for young-men who have likewise received their education in Europe or America—a partiality which he not only does not conceal, in the choice of his colleagues and collaborators, but which he reveals in his treatment of the *indigenous stuff* here. In his laborious habits and love of thoroughness lies the secret of his success, even as in his intense sincerity of purpose and readiness for sacrifice, lies the secret of his popularity. With his acquaintances, he is reserved to a degree, with his friends he is intimate and hearty, to the stranger he is courteous, to a colleague he can be rude. His

intense excitability and "unbalanced emotionalism" account for his rapid decisions and his firm adherence to them. Seldom does he take a suggestion from others and not seldom does he brush them aside with contempt. He is supremely conscious of his talents which are undoubtedly of a high order, and therefore evinces the superiority complex which springs natural to him for he is superior to many, but there lurks somewhere in him an inferiority complex as well—he would not like to be considered inferior even to Gandhi. Lately he has not accepted the drafts prepared by his *Bapu* but almost every resolution has been drafted by himself—as the public can well judge.

Jawaharlal begins his discussions with a thunder,—abuses everybody about him, curses the temperament of his countrymen, criticizes Gandhi's religious ethical rhodomontade, speaks about Russia, Spain and China, and creates the disturbance that a crocodile causes in thigh deep waters when its prey on whom it has a firm hold, makes a gentle attempt to escape from its grip. It is all slush and mud, eddies and whirlpools, splashing and beating. Presently Jawaharlal calms down, and chooses a concrete victim for his vehement diatribes. The day is over, the night is a busy one. The midnight oil burns, the midnight current runs on, till the early hours of the morning and a fine, crisp, scintillating, effulgent draft is ready which is an essay on the distempers and dangers of the day. Till lately however, it looks as though there has been an agreement between him and his *Bapu* that he should allow *Bapu* to do what he likes, while *Bapu* should leave him free to say what

he likes. "I am sorry I can't oblige Lord Stanley"—said Jawaharlal once. "Gentlemen, you have been too long here, get out" said he recently. These ejaculations are perfectly compatible with a loyal support of a well-reasoned *Congress Resolution*.

One could not know what view Jawahar held on war resistance—was it nonembarrassing individual Civil Disobedience? or was it pacifist policy or pure nonviolence or 'mass civil disobedience—and no damned nonsense?' But on all vital occasions, he was content to trot along the path marked out for him by Gandhi. Only during the visit of Sir Stafford Cripps, Jawaharlal has chalked out a course—all his own. Indeed he had not seen Gandhi after his release in December '41—until a formal meeting of the Working Committee summoned him to Wardha. He was not keen on Wardha as the venue of the A I. C. C. in January 1942. He considered Wardha a sleepy hollow in which is ensconced this philosopher—Gandhi, with half a dozen attendants who could never see beyond their nose or at the most beyond their toes. The fact is that he was too forward for Gandhi but was unwilling to cut himself adrift from his care, tutelage and guidance, as others had chosen to do. All this is proof of his intense struggle to remain loyal to the Congress and reconcile that loyalty with his own restlessness, his dynamic energy, the broad sweeps and wide curves through which his mind moves. For all the world, he would not turn a recalcitrant.

Jawaharlal's character and outlook in this respect are worthy of emulation. If the prevailing tone and temper of the Congress—its Working Committee runs

against his own, he quietly selects a place abroad and sails or flies away thither. He charges himself with new ideas and returns with an electro-motive force, with a drive and dynamic energy that overcomes the inertia of the Congress and sets it in ever accelerating motion. Thus it was that he went to Russia along with his respected father in 1927, that he spent a long period abroad when he flew to Geneva in connection with his wife's illness, and finally that he toured Europe in 1938 when the Munich pact was coming into being. His visits to Ceylon and China were not of this order—they were goodwill [missions. When he was about to be released, rather when his release was expected, in November 1941, a suggestion was made to Gandhi and emanated from a high quarter that he should visit Russia which had joined the war four months previously. At the Press Conference after Cripps' mission was concluded (on 12-4-42) he stated that he was feeling tired and was inclined to leave India though for a week. After the A.I.C.C. meeting was over in Allahabad, a suggestion seems to have been made favouring a goodwill mission to Russia which may, still see the aforesaid suggestion made to Gandhi in November, 42, fulfilled.

When it came however to Sir Stafford Cripps' visit, Jawaharlal has departed from the customary personal loyalties. Though C. R. and he do not agree on the details of deviation, both of them have pursued a common course and been helpful to one another. C. R. is comparatively a moderate before Jawaharlal for C. R. is the intellect and Jawahar is the emotion or shall we say C. R. is the heat and Jawahar the

light? If any single person can claim the credit for having kept the national demand of India on a high pedestal and platform, it is Jawaharlal and none else. Gandhi did doubtless accept Independence in December 1929. But Jawaharlal had forced it to the front in 1927 in Madras. At the All Parties Conference in Lucknow it was Jawaharlal that had drafted an Independence pledge and formed an Independence League and struck a note out of tune with his father's at the conference itself and thereafter as well. It was under his presidency that the Independence Flag was hoisted at 12 midnight on the 31st December, 1929. From that day to this, it must be said to the glory of Jawaharlal that he has kept the flag flying. Cripps came and we witnessed a strange but reluctant reconciliation to the preamble of the Cripps' proposals. On this question of Independence there is a real irony of fate in the reversed attitudes of Gandhi and Jawaharlal. We all know how if Defence had been satisfactorily transferred to an Indian Member, the Working Committee would have been aggregable to some kind of settlement. At any rate, whatever amendments might have been proposed to the clauses on non-accession and States' people, there is no reference anywhere in the spate of literature that has grown up around the Cripps mission to any proposal of a change to the preamble which related to the Status of India. That is to say, Dominion Status with the right to secede is not denounced to. But what does Gandhi say? From the fall of France (June 1940) Gandhi has adhered to complete Independence. He told the Viceroy so and in the issue of *Harijan* dated April 19th, he says

I have no doubt about his (Sir Stafford Cripps) goodwill. He believed that no one could have brought anything better for India. But *he should have known that at least the Congress would not look at Dominion Status even though it carried the right of secession the very moment it was taken.* He knew too that the proposal contemplated the splitting up of India into three parts each having different ideas of governance. It contemplated Pakistan, and yet not the Pakistan of the Muslim League's conception. And last of all it gave no real control over Defence to Responsible Ministers.

The vision of Gandhi is a complete circle with its centre in India and the circle is not intersected by other circles. The larger world is only a larger circle—but one concentric with the smaller. Not so Jawaharlal's. His circle is intersected by the circle of Spain, of China, of America and of Russia whose centres, however, are eccentric with that of India. Hence, it is that the vision suffers from want of focus. Other images blur the picture of India formed on the retina. There is diplopia, and this alone must account for the little variation on the question of complete Independence.

Jawaharlal is 52. It is time that he grew sober like most men who reach that age. To those that have known him for the past quarter of a century, there is, one must admit readily visible in him, a world of change. He has grown *Indian* every cell and every fibre without losing his wider outlook. He is proud of his *Hindu* tradition without losing kinship with the Moslem and the Jew, the Christian

and the Parsi. There is also a certain awareness of his being a Brahmin but he remembers it only to feel the call to service and sacrifice the more. His Communism and Socialism have all been Indianized in accordance with his own message to the socialist conference held at Faizpur. "Communism minus violence"—that is what we want, said he and that is 'Gandhism'—said I. All these years however of intense *susrusha* of Gandhi and *samparka* with him have not made him a *Satyagrahi*. If any biographer has recorded his exploits at public meetings from Tennivelli to Peshawar and from Karachi to Sylhet, the list would make one feel aghast. The wonder is that people have suffered them all—not without secret resentment or open retaliation on occasions, but that very sufferance proves his widespread and unprecedented popularity—amongst the politicians of the day. "Why should I not lose my temper?" he asks boyishly. "Because you must look elegant and not put on a funeral face or a castor oil countenance." I answer. "Why should I be humble—I don't understand humility," he adds. "Because humility, irradiates character" is the answer. All sacrifice shines to greater advantage and all service bears better fruit when anger is subdued and humility is cultivated. This is not the mere goody goody preaching of an old world devotee, but of Madame Chiang-Kai-Shek who in her recent article to the *New York Times* headed "Will Dawn come from the East?" says

"The obligations of nations towards each other have been one of the central themes of philosophic

thought in China for thousands of years. One of the greatest of our sages taught that humility, a bitter medicine to proud nations would bring its own undying reward.

“He who is great must make humility his base. He who is high must make lowliness his foundation.”

“If a great kingdom humbles itself before a small kingdom, it shall make that small kingdom its prize. And if a small kingdom humbles itself before a great kingdom, it shall win over that great kingdom. Thus the one humbles itself in order to attain, the other attains because it is humble. But in order that both may have their desire, the great one must learn humility.”

“The reason why rivers and seas are able to be lords over a hundred mountain streams, is that they know how to keep below them.”

“I have three precious things which I hold fast and prize. The first is gentleness, the second is frugality, the third is humility, which keeps me from putting myself before others. Be gentle, and you can be bold, be frugal, and you can be liberal, avoid putting yourself before others, and you can become a leader among men.”

“The wisdom that echoes back to us from half-forgotten centuries may supply a need that is particularly felt in the perplexed world of today and may aid us in that complete revision of our ideas about each other that will bring about mutual understanding and appreciation between the East and the West.”

It must however be said to the credit of Jawaharlal that his repentance is immediate and sincere and his

reparations are wholehearted and handsome, though there is little guarantee that history will not repeat itself the very next moment. He is aware of his shortcomings and that is the surest guarantee that one day he will turn a new leaf in his book of character. But when all is said and done, the fact remains that Jawaharlal is a politician—not a saint or philosopher. He loves the good things of the world, but under no circumstances, places pleasure before duty or self before country. He is thus inured to the severities of a hard life, can travel third class, sleep on the naked earth, walk up miles of distance and live on a poor fare. Gandhi and Jawaharlal are poles apart in structure, faith and philosophy. Yet they have worked together for twenty one years, agreeing to differ, differing in their agreement,—which has been made possible only by the sense of proportion, perspective and propriety observed by each in dealing with the other and both in dealing with the rest of the world. On one occasion Jawahar castigated his colleagues as rubber stamps. “yes” was the retort—“there are many rubber stamps and at least one punching machine amongst us.” The fact is that Gandhi is a philosopher and prophet, Jawaharlal is a politician and man of the world. Yet Gandhi is the inspiration and Jawaharlal is the instrument. It is thus that the affinity of Jawaharlal the politician to Gandhi should be explained. Everyone knows that they are as fire and water, but in that very opposites the real affinity abides. If Jawaharlal analyses, Gandhi synthesizes. If Jawaharlal the politician soars high, Gandhi broadens the base and balances his centre of gravity. If Jawaharlal the politician is

for speed, Gandhi is for volume. Jawaharlal the politician is like the Godavari that starts at Nasik and rolls over highland and low with breakneck speed and permeates glen and forest, and cuts through hill and dale in mighty torrents, Gandhi is like the bed of the river at Rajamahendravaram—broad in its expanse, unfathomable in its depth, tranquil in its pose, albeit quick-flowing and pouring its contents above the dam into the numerous channels to fertilize the fallow fields all round bringing happiness and prosperity to millions of men on earth. Jawahar the politician is like the avalanche solid and shining on the hill-top and melting away in a tace, and feeding the Ganga into which the Yamuna pours its contents. Gandhi and Jawahar meet as the Ganga and the Yamuna meet—the one with its limpid waters of nonviolence and the other with its turbid contents of passion and rage, anger and outburst but both run aside of each other only for a while and soon merge into each other so as to combine breadth and depth with height science with philosophy, material with spiritual and—shall we say?—"violence" with "non-violence."

B PATABHI SITARAMAYYA

Masulipatam,
April 21, 1942

PREFACE

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has attained an unique position in India's history. His writings and his personality and above all his sincerity have brought him his deserved popularity—thoroughout India and the rest of the world

Jawaharlal is one of those leaders who have been responsible to link the destiny of the Indian people with the common struggle of the exploited throughout the world. His international outlook has been influenced by his Socialism and Socialist experiments in Russia. But his Socialism is not merely abstract nor does he think of applying those principles to India without taking into consideration the existing conditions of the country. He is one of those who hold that the introduction of Socialism in India must take note of the prevailing conditions.

Jawaharlal's internationalism is that of an idealist, looking forward to a new order of things where there will be no want and no war. He rightly thinks that India in common with her sister nations, China and Russia have got a great place to fill in the coming order. But naturally the independence of India

comes before everything else. India must be mistress in her own house, only a free India will be able to throw herself with the progressive ideas of a free world.

Jawaharlal, the man, always looks out of his picture as a statesman. His writings have brought him nearer to the hearts of millions who have never even seen him. The great popularity of his *Autobiography* is not due to the fact that it is a lucid exposition of his political philosophy, it is because the book is so human, it brings the picture of a sensitive nature deeply affected by the sufferings and inhumanity that man has inflicted on man. Those little details of his personal life, his love of the beautiful things of the world tell more about his personality than a hundred statements of his political life do.

It is common knowledge that Jawaharlal's intellectual and political outlook is coloured by Western ideas.

The author, in this book, has given a lucid summary of Jawaharlal's political principles. He has traced the background which is responsible for those beliefs. It is a synthesis of Jawaharlal's writings which cover so many different subjects. It is to the credit of the young author that he has succeeded in giving a living picture in so short a compass.

BRULABHAI J. DESAI

Bombay
22nd May, 1942

PREFACE

In India Jawaharlal has attained a popularity which is unique. Other leaders are respected, looked up to, even loved, but the adoration which Jawaharlal receives can hardly be rivalled by anyone else. The mere prospect of coming into contact with him, however distant, evokes a thrill of joy in the hearts of young and old, men and women without any distinction. The surging crowds who attend his meetings wherever he goes, make an inspiring sight. And this popularity has gone beyond the shores of India. He has travelled widely in the East as well in the West and his name and personality have aroused the same enthusiasm in the hearts of men wherever he has gone. He was hailed as the worthy ambassador of India in Ceylon when he went there carrying a message of peace and goodwill on behalf of the Indian nation as represented by the National Congress. Thousands and ten thousands ignoring the rigours of rain and sun, have waited for hours on road and mountain sides, house tops and tree tops to have a glimpse of him and to hear a word from him.

People trust him. They have faith in him. They know he is engaged in fighting their battles, in the

fighting of which he never spares himself. They are confident he will never betray them and will never be tired of the heavy burden of the cross he has volunteered to carry for them.

He is a champion of liberty. A brave fighter for the cause of freedom. He hates injustice and exploitation. His generous nature revolts against all such inflictions, whether they take place within the boundaries of India or outside. It is this hatred of injustice which has made him an internationalist, and which has got him deeply interested in foreign politics and world affairs. He has tried to visit those afflicted spots of the world which on different occasions came under the heel of reactionary and imperialist forces and has always been foremost in expressing his fullest sympathy for their cause.

He has wide vision and invariably views problems in their relation to the totality of life. He finds himself incapable of isolating any particular incident, subject or item from its historical background. That is why it sometimes happens that he loses himself in the vastness of his own subject, that is also the reason why he speaks for such long hours from the platform.

However, the centre of his work and devotion is India, the land of his birth. He chafes under the chains of its slavery. He feels their weight as it were on his body and is ceaselessly engaged in the effort to break these chains. Long years of his youth have been spent in jail into which he has been thrown again and again by those who today profess to be fighting the battles of freedom and democracy. But he is

busy serving India whether inside the iron bars of the British jail or outside. He has written some of his most valued books during those spans of leisure which have been forced upon him during the long intervals of his incarceration. He will be long remembered for some of these books which are of more absorbing interest than many a novel. He has a quick racy style befitting his impatient active temperament, a reflection of his noble soul which is ever trying to ascend an eternally ascending wave.

His writings are a source of inspiration, as is his personality and both are restlessly beckoning to higher and nobler ways of life.

The story of Jawaharlal's life has been narrated by himself and several others in different languages. The following pages do not give his biography in the orthodox way. They are more a commentary on his life and work. The author has tried to give a summary survey of the important events of contemporary national history which forms an integral part of Jawaharlal's life. He has tried to explain Jawaharlal's ideas on various subjects and the different aspects of national life. The second part of the book is devoted to an exposition of his ideas and is divided into twelve chapters dealing with socialism and its influence on Indian thought and life, democracy, the Indian National Congress and the federation, minorities and Swaraj, social reform, Indians abroad and other allied subjects. It has been shown what contribution Jawaharlal was able to make under all these many heads.

Jawaharlal is idolized and loved. But it is the future historian alone who will be able to make a true appraisal of the great contribution he has made to the growth and evolution of the Indian people. India owes much to him and it is but right that the fascinating story of his life should be told and written and heard and read over and over again in many different ways by people whom he has served and served well.

RAJESHWRI NEHRU

Bryauston,
July 1941, Simla

THE AUTHOR'S APOLOGY

It may be considered rather presumptuous of me to offer such a volume of analysis of the personality and ideas of this great son of India of whom Mahatma Gandhi recently said "Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is my legal heir. I am sure when I pass he will take up all the work I do. He is a brave and courageous man." I can claim neither the scholarship nor the distinction to embark on such a theme but only the desire to understand and appreciate with all the high seriousness of youth. This, I hope, has saved the work from becoming unduly adulatory, priggish or preposterous.

In this volume I have made no Heracleian effort to prove the rightness of Nehru's ideas but only analysed them in the light of comparative political and economic thought and denoted the exact place he occupies among contemporary men of action and thought. I trust that I have neither depreciated the value of his ideas, injured their novelty nor dulled their brightness. This is not said with the least atom of desire to forestall criticisms but from a sincere feeling that such a work, however inadequate, will be of great

use when the destiny of India is being settled. In fact the scalping knife of the critic causes little pain to one whose love of truth makes him a severe critic of his own work.

Surely no one has offered such a volume to the public who is so indebted to others. I wish to express my gratitude to Professor S. Sukantha Sastri, the eminent historian for valuable guidance. If in this work I have succeeded in reducing the vast data from all available sources of information into order, it is mainly due to his help.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya for his "Invitation", to Mrs. Rameshwar Nehru and Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai for their Prefaces and to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu for her appreciative opinion. I have for years made myself a nuisance to a host of friends. My grateful thanks are due to Professor V. Raghavendra Rao for his warm co-operation and to Messrs. Anandilal Ramdeo Podar, J. K. Mehta, G. P. Hutheesing, N. G. Jog, V. R. Rao and V. P. Venkataramah for their ever-ready help.

It is impossible to over-state the affectionate care and intelligence with which Mr. D. S. Dalal printed this book. To Mr. G. R. Bhatkal I stand indebted for good counsel, assistance and encouragement during the continuance of this task.

This volume is dedicated to my valued friend, Mr. Morarji Padamsey, whose prime delight is the advancement of pure and healthful literature.

One line I am constrained to add. I should be grossly insensible to sympathy if I failed to acknowledge, with sincere gratitude, the cordial reception given to this work by the press and the public.

THE MAN

To the world India is symbolised by two personalities — Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. In an age when personalities make history and in a country where all the aspirations and hopes are centred round individuals, it is logical that these two eminent sons of India should represent the national will and ideals.

It is not a case of a mere wish being the father of the thought when we speak of Nehru as the hope of India. By his character and achievements, he represents the coming trends of Indian history and in his own mental and spiritual make-up are reflected the inherent complexities of the

Indian situation and also a way of resolving the difficulties that confront India's march to freedom.

Biographers have hitherto emphasised the contrast between the so-called female and male spirits of Gandhi and Nehru, the one being basic, enduring, mystic, non-violent, religious and with a saint's compassion; the other representing a man of action, of the hour, agnostic, heterodox and humanistic. But this contrast is more apparent and superficial than real. If any dualism of spirit as such exists, in the light of Indian philosophy and psychology we should assume that the *Purusha* or male spirit is inherently co-existent, more stable and returning to the norm after the balance has been disturbed by the *Prakriti* or elemental surge of emotions. It is also illogical to set off activism and intellectualism against pacifism, non-violence and mysticism.

What is of enduring interest is not the difference in pace or technical details but what we may call the historical continuity of the Indian spirit. This is the secret of Nehru's hold on the imagination of the

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masses. The passionate desire for freedom, hatred of tyranny, love of truth and justice and unswerving belief in non-violence are common to both Gandhi and Nehru. To say "that people listen to Nehru and Nehru only to Gandhi and Gandhi only to God" is no doubt a brilliant and final statement of the problem. But people listen to Nehru precisely because Nehru believes in the divine inspiration of Gandhi

Of the mightiest imaginative power and yet at the same time a practical statesman, dowered with insight and resolution; no longer a youth and not yet an old man; an idealist of to-morrow with the power of living in the present; an Aryan in the deepest sense of the term and called to reconcile and represent a synthesis of cultures Jawaharlal is the crown and consummation of India's genius and patriotism.

His life is a notable example of the extraordinary way in which fate moulds a career on a definite plan. From his mother he inherited the trustful look; from his father the composure of an aristocrat and from his Kashmiri ancestry came his instinctive

shrewdness. He has the face of a thinker, with a transparent complexion and a finely chiselled mouth; the nose, thin and well-modelled and the forehead high and intellectual, his cultured voice comparable to a violoncello; his features keen from restless mental energy and the lines from the nostril to the extremities of his mouth give character to his countenance. The lips are delicately cut, slight, but there is a firm chin showing determination. His smile is arch, confident, as if disguising his pleasure at idolatry. One sees in his face four traits; a profound sadness by the dark rings near the eyes; a lively gaiety by the small pencillings about the corners of the mouth, lightning quickness of decision by the graceful profile and a reflective smile springing from a happy sisterhood of intellect and character. In the depth of his being two main forces operate and strengthen each other; both a patriotic leader and a philosophic enthusiast. His qualities may be best summed up under the word: noble i.e., fulfilling the whole duty of man.

What enchants everyone, when he comes

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into contact with Jawaharlal is his good breeding, the charm of his personality. He, indeed, far beyond any other political leader of his age "looked into the seeds of time." But this will not be realised till the passage of time develops those seeds into a golden harvest. Jawaharlal would not have been Jawaharlal, if he would lament, "Time, run back and fetch the age of gold "

He is a child of his age but has outstepped it. In his writings, critical conception and warmth of patriotism meet together. Other politicians might write a style more imposing, more versatile, more acute, but I never saw one who writes like a *man*, and that is more than most of the other leaders do, who have neither the genius of the one sex nor the refinement of the other. His leading excellence is his frankness; "I am not a literary man, and I am not a historian; what, indeed, am I? I find it difficult to answer that question. I have been a dabbler in many things; I began with science at College, and then took to the law, and, after developing various interests in life, finally adopted the popular and widely practised

profession of gaol-going in India.”

He loves life, action and power. His is not a sort of falsetto greatness but one which has waited and won the approval of events. It is in the role of a Titanic destroyer that he figures in politics and he is playing his part with magnificent grace, courage and skill. To estimate chances in such an ordeal tests self-knowledge and self-command to their depths. He esteems nothing so highly as his country, and its freedom and honour. This principle is rooted in his temperament, spirit and character. Happily, in these supreme tasks of the soldier and the statesman he has exercised faculties which shape means to ends.

The scenery of one of the meetings which Jawaharlal addresses is a stupendous picture. When the band thunders forth “*Vande Mataram*” he makes his entrance in royal state escorted by charming *desasevikas* in saris of saffron. His apparel is severely simple, pure white, in which the only touch of hue is the silken *chaddar*, which resembles an amethyst-coloured toga. The khaddar cap ‘an ugly head-gear, the convicts cap,’

lends an ineffable charm. His costume has a Roman touch and re-calls a young Roman senator. Every article of dress is neatly adjusted on his compact, athletic figure.

His features breathe an animation, a fire, an enthusiasm, a vivid intelligence not seen in any other countenance. He has a distinct smack of the alert-west. When he mounts the rostrum with the strict bearing of the soldier, the vast surging crowd burst forth "*Jawaharlal-Ki-Jar*". Fifty-two summers have not faded his youthful lustre. He finds his inspiration in the myriad upturned faces and his oration is not a flight in elocution but abounds in swift, argumentative thrusts. Every flash of thought and every colour of feeling makes his face appealing by expression. There is some grave sweetness in his voice and he perorates, with the swiftness of a race-horse approaching the winning-post :

"The promised land may yet be far from us and we may have to march wearily through the deserts, but who will take away from us that deathless hope which has survived the scaffold and immeasurable suffering and sorrow, who will dare to crush the spirit of India which has found rebirth again and again after so many crucifixions ? "

The mob releases its pent-up emotion in an exultant cry.

In a trial of nerve he is attracted by the danger. He says : " Danger seems terrible from a distance ; it is not so bad if you have a close look at it. And often it is a pleasant companion, adding to the zest and delight of life." An unimpeachable testimony is furnished by Gandhi, when he remarks : " Believe me, if Jawaharlal is not in gaol to-day, it is not because he is afraid of it. He is quite capable of mounting the gallows with a smile on his lips."

He dared to beard a dictator to his face. When he alighted in Rome, Mussolini had cancelled a cabinet meeting and anxiously waited to meet him. As the rape of Abyssinia had shocked his refined feeling for liberty he was too contemptuous to meet Italy's Man of Destiny. His actions are all leavened by elevated reflection, outpourings of sensibility. It is the little white untruth to say that Jawaharlal vacillates and his vacillation is the vacillation of unfamiliarity with a new type of politics which has degenerated from science to gambling. To defraud him

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of consistency is nothing but wily political forehandedness. Of him it may be said that he is complete in all the greatness that belongs to action.

In Jawaharlal is personified all the revolutionary forces, the sharp and electrical forces in conflict with the old-world society. No conception of this intrepid warrior is falser than the one that like the tails of Samson's foxes, he carries fire-brands and sets the country in a flame. The earnestness of his feelings has a certain terror in it. It is mistaken for 'fiery temper.' The suffrages of all who could boast of his acquaintance is that he is a man in the highest degree amiable and excellent. On common occasions his manner is easy and agreeable, sometimes silent and meditative, but in general sweet and sportive. He is fond of vivacious conversation but when he is drawn into 'giving an opinion upon anything he drops into reserve.

His scorn blisters and scalds and when he entreats his mood becomes tenderness itself. He chastises obscurantists with a whip of scorpions. His easy, flowing pen is united

to a sense of the humours. He turns his acid criticism into a crackle of jests. As Indian nationalism began to bear forth foliage and fruit, the Liberal's hatred and malice spat their poison on its blossoms. Fortunately, the skilful gardener neutralised its deadly effect before the effusions could shrivel the buds

A new order of political events has arisen in India of which Gandhi and Nehru are types. These two types of men have reacted upon each other and it is a totally misleading assumption that the ideas they represent are entirely due to a pseudo-scientific racial classification. Non-violence and adherence to truth are not the products of an effeminate, emasculated race of commercial population—nor is intellectualism and aggressive activist spirit the product of geographical or racial environment. If such a theory of the origin of non-violence be accepted it will be running counter to all metaphysical and scientific conclusions. The personality of Gandhi is such that out of the dust he can make men, out of straw, heroes. Therefore, it is no wonder that under Gandhi's spiritual train-

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ing Jawaharlal naturally became transformed.

It is the same ideal that enables Jawaharlal to enkindle the masses and Gandhi to exalt them. The difference, if any, is not in the ideals and consequently not in the permanence and durability of the fundamental theme but in means and methods. Jawaharlal resembles a high-powered racing-car impatient to cover the whole ground and set up speed records, whereas Gandhi is a tractor slowly but thoroughly breaking up the ground, to prepare it for the seeds of the new order.

Age and experience will mellow and produce a finer, more enduring spirit without destroying the keenness and hardness. This is realised by Nehru and that is why Gandhi and Jawaharlal have received the gratitude of a loving nation. Jawaharlal can well say with Rathenau: "For good or for bad you will not find my like again."

CHAPTER I

SOCIALISM—A WAY OF LIFE

Socialism by the trend of world events has become an accepted means of world reconstruction and it is no wonder that it should make a strong appeal to the imagination and the conscience of Nehru. It appeals to him in the scientific economic sense and as a philosophy of life.¹ The bonds of economic and political subjection can only be broken by revolutionary changes in the political and social structure ending vested interests in land and industry as well as the feudal and autocratic Indian States.

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Presidential Address to the National Congress*, Lucknow, 1936

Thus the future constitution of the nation may be evolved perhaps on the Russian model but without passing through much that is cruel and painful. As an ideal, socialism unless some world catastrophe intervenes, will put an end to wars and conflicts which capitalism breeds.

Socialism has many aspects as Nehru realises. In the beginning he seems to have been much impressed by Fabianism and he considers Webb's work on Russia to be the fruit of much study, characterised by force and compass and bearing an imperishable value. But the British brand of socialists have a very mild programme of distant change. The Fabians are remotely connected with the workers and they can be called merely advanced liberal intellectuals¹

1 Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glances of World History*, p 540, 1939, see also *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, edited by G. Bernard Shaw. Edward R. Pease, *History of the Fabian Society*, 1925; George Bernard Shaw, *The Fabian Society, Its Early History*, Archibald Henderson, *Bernard Shaw, Playboy and Prophet*, chs XVII-XII Sidney Webb, *Socialism, True and False*, Fabian Society Tracts No 51 According to Webb, the object of socialism is to transfer ownership, not to the workers but to the society. Prof Hearnshaw says "To confuse collectivism with socialism is a gross abuse of terminology, for the introduction and perpetuation of which the Fabians in general, and Messrs Shaw and Webb in particular are especially to be condemned."

The anarchists are also socialists of a kind but though the anarchist ideal is accepted as a shining goal many have tried for a centralised and strong state government under socialism. Anarchism gave rise to much emotion and led to a type of violence which brought great discredit.¹ But intrinsically it is a philosophy and an ideal, which has appealed to many fine men.²

The syndicalists like the anarchists tried to eliminate the state or at least limit its power. The industries had to be controlled by workers organised in a syndicate in that particular industry. And finally various syndicates were to elect representatives to a grand council which would look after the affairs of the whole country and act as a kind of parliament without interfering with the inner arrangements of the industry. The method advocated by the syndicalists was the General Strike to bring the life of

1. Outstanding instances are the attempts, in 1878 and 1879, to assassinate William I of Germany, King Humbert of Italy, and King Alphonso XII of Spain, Tsar Alexander II in 1881, President Carnot of France in 1895, the premier of Spain in 1898, and King Humbert in 1900, assassination of President McKinley in 1901, King Alphonso XIII in 1906, of the Mikado in 1910 and the assassination of King George in Greece in 1913.

2. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, p. 537.

the country to a stand-still and achieve the objective.¹

Marxism does not propose a sudden and violent abolition of the state but envisages a time when the state "whithers away" having served its purpose of educating the people in collective responsibility.² The Marxist way of thinking was proved to be a lever that shakes the stronghold of capitalism and turns the empires round as if they were a globe of paste-board. To Nehru Marxism is a way of life and human desires and actions can be interpreted by its principles. It is a call to action, and an attempt to reduce human history to a logical system with something of the inevitability of fate.³

1 Lagardelle, *Le Socialisme Ouvrier*, pp 203-204, 209-211, 223-224, Merdith Atkinson, "The General Strike in History", *Nineteenth Century*, XCIX (1926), pp 795-804, Wilfred H Cook, *The General Strike*, 1931. Sorel in his *Reflexions la Violence* has laid great emphasis on the myth value of the general strike. It is primarily a demonstration of the latent social power of wage-earners. By simultaneously quitting work in essential industries they hope to bring about the fundamental social transformation which syndicalism seeks to achieve.

2. "The State" said Engels "has not always existed" "With the disappearance of classes, the state, too, will inevitably disappear."

Marx says the socialists' state dies out *erstrirbt ab*; it "whithers away" (quoted by Bukharin in *Marxism and Modern Thought*, p 325)

3 *Ibid*, p. 544.

Marx assumed that in some form or other class-conflict was inherent in all ages and his view of history was that of an ever-changing and advancing society. Inevitably capitalism after passing through a series of crises would topple over because of its inherent want of equilibrium.

Nehru hails Marx as a major prophet to Russia and a possible inspiration to the troubled world.¹ He says that it is remarkable how many of his predictions have come true. Nehru is keenly alive to the universal character of the philosophy of socialism and the question is no longer about its desirability but about the pace and methods of advance. He pleads that our ideals should be brought into line with the great human goal of social and economic equality, to the ending of all types of exploitation and to national freedom.

The present world war has already produced a salutary effect even on the conservative minds of British statesmen who have put forward the idea of world reconstruction after the war. It needed a terrible

¹ See Morris Hillquit, *From Marx to Lenin*, 1921, p. 6. Sidney Hook, *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx*, p. 31.

stimulus of wholesale slaughter and destruction of property to rouse the ruling classes to a sense of social justice. Democracy and self-defence will be forced to accept some of the fundamental theories of socialism as the only way out of the universal chaos.

Marxian socialism has been attached as a false philosophy, unsound economics and a destructive political method¹. The critics of socialism have spared no terms to censure the false prophet's jerrybuilt pretentious and ruinous system. A materialistic conception of history is pernicious and the economic foundations regarding value and labour, wages and interest are perverted and crazy. The dogma of the class-war is radically false as an interpretation of history.² In short, as Keynes

1 F J C Hearnshaw, *A Survey of Socialism*, pp 282-285, 1928. Brij Narain, *Marxism Is Dead*, pp 259-262. Mr Punch went beyond the limit of legitimate humour when he remarked "A scientist suggests dissipating ice-bbergs with heat bombs. Personally we think it would be cheaper to land two socialists on the things and let them discuss what socialism really means" *Punch*. February 18, 1925

2 Marx set forth his theory of history most effectively in the following words *Die deutsche Ideologie*, written in 1846 and published posthumously, in *Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, historisch-Kritische Gesamt-Ausgabe*, ed by D Rayzanoff, II Vols (1927-1931), Vol I, pp 7-87, 211-219, *Poverty of Philosophy*, contribution to the Critique of *Political Economy*

says, Marxian socialism must always remain a portent to the historians of opinion—how a doctrine so illogical and so dull can have exercised so powerful and enduring an influence over the minds of men, and through them, over the events of history.¹

Again, it is urged that Marxism is socialism of the industrial proletariat and cannot succeed except in a highly industrialized country. The industrial proletariat by seizing political power turns the means of production into state property and thus automatically abolishes itself, all class distinctions and finally the state. Nehru modifies Marxism to the extent that all private property should not be abolished.²

1 Keynes, J M., *The End of Laissez-Faire*, p 34, 1926
Hearnshaw says, "Marxian socialism is a reversion to the individualistic ethics of the Stone Age and its fantastic economics is a mere effort to rationalize robbery" (p 48)

Kirkup observes: "In the Manifesto of the Communist Party, Marx declared that the proletariat has nothing to lose but its chains. It has been the unfortunate destiny of himself to forge new chains for the working class in the shape of dogmatic materialism, a rigid and abstract collectivism and ultra-revolutionary views which still hamper it in the task of emancipation" (Kirkup, *A History of Socialism*, pp 422-443).

2 Jawaharlal Nehru, *Presidential Address to the National Congress*, Lucknow, 1936. "That means the ending of private property, except in a restricted sense, and the replacement of the present profit system by a higher ideal of co-operative service"

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According to him on the basis of that very theory it is absurd to copy blindly what had taken place in Russia. For its application depended on the particular condition prevailing in the country in question and the stage of its historical development.¹ A slower tempo can avoid much misery and only a revolutionary plan can solve the two related questions of the land and industry as well as the other major problems before the country.

Nehru's conception of socialism may be compared with empirical collectivism. The increasing economic legislation in recent years has been variously called liberalism, radicalism, popularism and progressivism but the distinctive mark is the collectivist tendency. In modern industrial life the functions of production are so minutely subdivided that unlimited effort either of the capitalist or of the labourer is a waste. And only the principle of collectivism can make production profitable and at the same time the profit motive, a competitive tendency and oppressive monopoly can be

1 Jawaharlal Nehru, *My Autobiography*, p 362.

removed. The collectivist rejects the extreme form of Marxian determinism, the theory of labour-created value and class-war and at the same time discredits the theory of clear-cut class distinction.¹

Economic individualism is not necessarily private ownership which disregards the rights of labour and of the community. It is also opposed to the excessive claims of the capitalist to control production and distribution. Collectivism stands for public ownership, labour legislation, regulation of prices, taxation and land politics. The collectivist does not admit that the removal of the incentive to competitive activity will result in loss of individuality. Every modern state has restricted the competitive tendency and the desire for economic gain is not the only incentive to skilful workmanship. Public ownership does not exclude graduation in

1 See A. Emil Davies *The Case for Nationalization*, Chs VII to XVI; L. T. Hobhouse *Liberalism*, pp 204-213; John M. Clark *Social Control of Business*, pt. III, 1926; Sumner H. Slichter *Modern Economic Society*, Chs XII-XIX, 1931; Ramsay Muir *Liberalism and Industry*, Ch XVII; Edward P. Cheyney, *Modern English Reform From Individualism to Socialism*, 1931; Neil Skene Smith *Economic Control*, Pts I, II, 1929; Adolf A. Berle and Gardiner C. Means *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, 1932

rank and in reward. This drift is visible even in Russia which under the impact of world events has been forced to abandon pure Marxist ideology.

Empirical collectivism assumes that though industries may be owned privately or by corporations or subject to state regulations such control is democratically necessary in order to secure just treatment for the worker as well as for the community. Even the most conservative governments and practical businessmen now agree that some sort of constructive planning is indispensable. It is not enough if we possess a faith in the tendency of big enterprise to socialize itself. In the United States of America a Committee on Social Trends reported in 1933 about the collectivist bias of legislation. It pointed with a vast array of statistical and documentary evidence that

1 *Recent Social Trends Report of the President Research Committee*, 2 Vols See Review of findings, 1932 The Report says . " It is conceivable that without any surrender of our belief in the merits of private property, individual enterprise and self-help, the American people will press towards a large measure of public control to promote the common welfare Our property rights remain but they undergo a change We continue to exercise an individual initiative but that initiative has larger possibilities, affects others more intimately and therefore is subject to more public control " *Recent Social Trends*, I, xxxiii.

the recent economic, cultural and constitutional development had not solved the problems of unemployment, over-production and social reform.

There is in our social organisation an institutional inertia and in our social philosophy a tradition of rigidity. Empirical or pragmatic collectivism seems therefore, the latest tendency avoiding the extremes of the earlier philosophies. The fundamental issue of the present is whether political and social liberty can be maintained under a regime of economic planning. It is a common-place that individualism should be displaced by collectivism if anything like social justice is to be achieved.¹

Socialism has been criticised as exalting the community above the individual and has degenerated into a cult of the state. But the state, it has been made quite clear,

¹ Sir Arthur Salter, *Recovery The Second Effort*, 1932; George Soule, *A planned Society*, 1932; Stuart Clare, *A New Deal*, 1932; Charles A Beard, *America Faces the Future*, 1932; Wallace B Donham, *Business Looks at the Unforeseen*, 1932

The experts hold to Salter's remarkable phrase "the world economic mechanism has lost its self-adjusting quality" or they deny that it ever had that quality. They all submit "plans for a managed economy" assigning a large measure of control to the state.

is but a means and its recognised duty is to care for the working classes and promote the ideals of freedom and justice, of brotherhood and mutual service.

Another facile criticism is to the effect that by equalising the human conditions it becomes the war-cry of the have-nots against the haves. However, Marx himself never assumed complete equality but by socialism tried to remove the harmful effects of private property and unrestricted competition.

The elimination of the capitalist and the expropriation of the land-lord are supposed to have been preached by the socialists and this is stigmatised as rationalised robbery. But it is the genuine merit of socialism that it has drawn attention to serious defects in the industrial organisation. Two human rights under socialism will no longer be subject to the vagaries of capitalism and class distinction, viz., the right to work and for the daily bread.

The eradication of competition and the extension of private enterprise alleged to be the cardinal tenets of socialism do not

necessarily result in a decrease of production either in quality or quantity. Other forms of competition not based on the profit motive operate in socialism, as prevailing in Russia. Pragmatic or empirical collectivism has been accepted in principle by many European governments. It is recognised that it is the right and duty of the state to intervene in economic affairs in order to see that private property does not destroy decent standards of living or create social injustice. The German Constitution of 1919, the Estonian Constitution and the Constitution of Finland, apart from Russia, recognise that the state has the power to promote social justice in specific ways as by setting up social insurance schemes, regulating trade on the necessities of life, confiscating royalties and unearned increments ¹

¹ Articles 151, 153 and 157 of the *German Constitution*, 1919 provided —

“The organisation of economic life must conform to the principles of justice, to the end that all may be guaranteed a decent standard of living”

“Property imposes obligations. Its use by the owner shall at the same time serve the public good”

Says Nehru : "Socialism cannot thrive in a society based on acquisitiveness. It becomes necessary to change the basis of the acquisitive society and remove the profit motive." Socialism cannot be forced on a country but inevitably it must prevail. Hating as he does violence as a method of achieving socialism, he is for as rapid a transformation of the social structure as possible under the present circumstances.

The elimination of violence leads to a purification of socialism. According to Albert Schaffle the future of the world belongs to purified socialism. It may be regarded as the co-ordination and consummation of every form of human progress,

"Labour shall be under the special protection of the Reich "

Article 25 of the *Estonian Constitution* declared that —

"The economic organisation must correspond with the principles of justice, the object of which is to secure conditions of living worthy of human beings "

Article 6 of the *Constitution of Finland* provides —

"The labour of citizens shall be under the specific protection of the state "

It has been shown that in the United States (in 1932) 200 corporations, out of a total of twenty odd thousand, control more than half the total corporate wealth of the country.

inasmuch as it applies to the use of all the factors of scientific, mechanical and artistic development in harmony with prevailing political and ethical ideals. The peaceful and eternal progress of mankind is possible only in such a rational socialism, where the real forces which operate in the modern world will be directed by beneficent ideals till as Tennyson sings :

“ Each man find his own in all men’s good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood ”

CHAPTER II

INDIAN SOCIALISM AND ITS FUTURE

Nehru by reason of his conviction and sacrifice occupies the foremost place among socialists in India. He is not an uncritical admirer of the type of socialism prevailing in the west and realises the necessity to modify the principles to suit the Indian conditions. To him, socialism being not merely an economic doctrine but a vital creed, he is spurred on to work for Indian independence. He assured that freedom for India is a fundamental thing and until it is achieved the supreme preoccupation of the Congress should be to win Swaraj.¹

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Presidential Address to the National Congress*, Lucknow, 1936.

As the President of the Indian National Congress thrice he would have been untrue to himself if he had not given voice to his socialist convictions. He desires that the Congress should become a socialist organisation and should join hands with all other forces in the world which are working for the same civilization. However, he realises, that the Congress cannot be forced to accept the completely socialistic creed. Such action would have resulted in a split and in the interests of unity he has promised to work unswervingly for the independence of the country. He says "it would surely be possible for all of us who believe in independence to join our ranks together even though we may differ on the social issue "

This attitude has been criticised by Subhas Chandra Bose, M. N. Roy and other lesser self-styled socialists. In this connection the history of the Socialist party in India is illuminating. In 1923, when a section in the Congress formed the Swaraj party to contest the elections there were three distinct parties divided on this issue; the

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No-Changers, the Pro-Council party and the Congress Socialists, who held their first Conference on the 17th May, 1934. Some Indian intellectuals became enthusiastic about socialism and started the Congress Socialist party. The word 'Congress' was prefixed as indicating an organic relationship with the Socialist party. The party was hailed as the natural outcome of the previous national struggle. It claims to stand for uncompromising opposition to imperialism, capitalism, foreign rule and federation. On the constructive side it advocated adult franchise on a functional basis and economic planning. The third Socialist Conference held at Faizpur declared its opposition to the new constitution and pleaded for revolutionary parliamentarianism. It gave its support to National Congress in the elections but bitterly denounced the action of the Congress Parliamentary Committee in refusing to set up socialist radicals as candidates. The Conference declared that imperialism taking shelter under fascism was attacking the citadel of democracy. Therefore, it appealed to the

people to refuse to volunteer, to make financial contributions or to serve in future wars.

Nehru impatient as he is of vague talk and utopian ideas without the will-power to implement them proved a disappointment to the majority of socialists, who hoped that as the Congress President he would use his influence to win over the organisation to the socialist ideology. Therefore, he has become the target of attack from various quarters. Foremost among his critics is Subhas Chandra Bose, who says : "The position of Pandit is an interesting one. His ideas and views are of a radical nature and he calls himself a full-blooded socialist, but in practice he is a loyal follower of Mahatma. It would probably be correct to say that while his brain is with the Left-Wingers, his heart is with Mahatma Gandhi."¹ Then again : "Mahatma Gandhi decided to back the candidature of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and this was a prudent

¹ Subhas Chandra Bose, *The Indian Struggle, 1920-1934*, p 38 "The Mahatma could henceforward proceed with his own plans without fear of opposition with his cabinet, and whenever any opposition was raised, he could always coerce the public by threatening to retire from the Congress or to fast unto death "

choice because it marked the beginning of a political *rapprochement* between the Mahatma and Pandit Nehru and a consequent alienation between the latter and the Congress Left-Wing."¹ Further he argues that Gandhi by advocating independence was able to win over some of the Left-Wing elements as well. The deliberate omission of the Left-Wingers from the list of the working committee members was meant by the Mahatma to coerce the Congress.² When the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was made, even Nehru failed in his responsibility, as the only Left-Wing member of the working committee and as President of the Congress, to prevent the ratification of the Pact.³ When the Pact was concluded Nehru declared that though he did not approve of some of the terms, as an obedient member of the Congress it was his duty to abide by the decision. Again Nehru after the suspension of the Civil Disobedience movement in 1933 gave expression to his socialistic or communistic ideas.

1. *Ibid*, p 194.

2. *Ibid*, p 200.

3. *Ibid*, p 228.

With the popularity only second to that of the Mahatma, with unbounded prestige among his countrymen, with a clear brain possessing finest ideas, with an up-to-date knowledge of modern world conditions, yet he failed.

Bose though a convinced socialist, has hardly given a constructive lead to the Socialist party. He stigmatises the Congress Socialists as under the influence of Fabian Socialism. He says that some of their ideas and shibboleths were the fashion several decades ago. He condemned the Congress Socialist party for offering a platform not only to those who are socialists by conviction but also to those who were dissatisfied with the Congress policy of council-entry. It is unfortunate in his opinion that the opposition to council-entry came from the Socialist party, because there is nothing anti-socialist in fighting within the legislatures if such a policy is otherwise deemed expedient. Nevertheless, the Congress Socialists do represent the radical force within the Congress and the country. Many of those who could have helped them

actively are not available at present. When their assistance will be forthcoming the party will be able to make more head-way.¹ Evidently under the impression that he himself would help actively and come to the assistance of the party he formed the Left Bloc, later christened, the Forward Bloc, after the debacle at Ramgarh.

In his Presidential address at Haripura² he said "I hold no brief for the Congress Socialist party and I am not a member of it. . . . it is desirable for the Leftist elements to be consolidated and a Leftist Bloc can have a *raison d'être* only if it is socialist in character. There are friends who object to such a bloc being called a party, but to me it is quite immaterial whether you call that a bloc, a group, league or party Within the limits prescribed by the Indian National Congress it is quite possible for a Leftist Bloc to have a socialist programme. Socialism is not an immediate problem for us—nevertheless socialist propaganda is necessary to

1 Subhas Chandra Bose, *The Indian Struggle*, 1920-1934

2. Subhas Chandra Bose, *Through Congress Eyes*, pp 1-51

prepare the country for socialism when political freedom has been won." The necessity for a Forward Bloc is thus advocated by Bose . The Right Wing having rejected the proposal for a composite cabinet refused to cooperate with the Left . Secondly, no immediate prospect for struggle was held out . Thirdly, the Congress Socialists and the Communists had given up the attempt to consolidate the Leftist elements . Fourthly, the Right Wingers under the guidance of the Gandhi Seva Sangh had stolen a march over the Leftists ¹

The achievements of the Forward Bloc have thus been enumerated . It made the Left Consolidation Committee superfluous . The Royists or the Radicals, the Congress Socialists and the Communists or the National Fronters have left the Consolidation Committee and only the Kisan Sabha and the Forward Bloc represent the Leftist movement . The Forward Bloc claims to have resisted the drift towards constitutionalism and compromise . It frustrated

¹ Statement of Subhas Chandra Bose published in *The Hindu*, May 8

the congress tendency to help the war effort. It created an atmosphere of struggle and the present national movement is due to the Forward Bloc, which launched it at Ramgarh ¹

The Forward Bloc cannot legitimately claim the credit for creating the atmosphere of struggle nor for being the sole representative of the socialist ideology. Apart from the personal factor involved, it is difficult to see the necessity for such a bloc.² Bose himself confesses that the programme of the Forward Bloc is the same as that of the Congress. The Bloc organisation itself is not free from the fascist bent when the membership is extended only to office-bearers in all the elective Congress Committees, while in the case of labour and trade union organisations elected officers of such bodies could be coopted. A bloc which favours this method is not likely to commend itself to the Congress, which believes in democracy.

1 Presidential Address by Subhas Chandra Bose delivered at the 2nd Session of Forward Bloc Conference held at Nagpur, *The Forward Bloc*, June 29, 1940

2 Says M. N. Roy: "I am still to be convinced that the Forward Bloc has some reason to exist"

Nehru declared that though some socialists might have joined the Block, its policy had not been declared as anything different from that of the Congress. The only difference of opinion was regarding the pace. But there was the danger of such a bloc attracting adventurers and opportunists. Further even fascist organisations has made use of socialist slogans. Therefore, unless there was a clear ideology there was the danger of drift towards a wrong course ¹

The radicals under the leadership of M. N. Roy at first tried to convert the Congress to their creed but the lack of a definite programme and the personal factor brought about an antagonism to even the fundamental tenets of the Congress. Roy condemns non-violence as unhealthy for a nation which feels hunger more than any other sensation. It has a deadening effect on the people's energy and its inevitable sequence is the weakening of the struggle for national freedom.² It is not a spontaneous expression of the spiritual nature

1. *The Hindu*, July 13, 1939

2 M N Roy, *The Alternative*, p 2, 1940.

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of the Indian people. It is based upon vested interests, and offers security to those who have a monopoly, native as well as foreign, in the face of the rising tide of revolution.

Nehru is charged with unpractical idealism, when he repeats the advice given to the British statesmen, to recognise India as an independent nation ¹ Nehru eschews the possibility of an alliance opposed to independence and fascism by "a smoke screen of beautiful phrases." He is trying to commit the Congress to a policy which will be neither honourable nor beneficial for the masses. Roy disclaims any knowledge of the working of the Forward Bloc, though there may be some affinity between it and himself. Regarding the Bloc he says that having no distinct ideological foundation, it is bound to fizzle out. Therefore, the Radical Democratic party was started by him in June 1940, because it is alleged that

¹ *Ibid*, pp 32-33 Commenting on Nehru's message to the *News Chronicle*, Roy says, 'The first thing that impressed me is the transparent sincerity of the document; only the sincerity appears to be based rather on the impractical idealism than on an intelligent conviction derived from a correct estimate of the realities of the situation. a confusion will be created by a smoke-screen of beautiful phrases'

the Congress war-policy amounts to helping fascism. It was hoped that the Congress would liberate itself from the reactionary influence of Gandhism and rescue the country to its true ideals and functions. A magniloquent claim is made that the Radical Democratic party is the true inheritor of the soul of the Congress.¹ The primary object of the party is to mobilise the Indian people in the world struggle against fascism. Therefore, Roy is prepared to make alliance with even the most reactionary forces in the country.

It is indeed a strange transformation of a personality which once professed to be a communist and opposed to imperialism. It is but right to ask whether the Radical party endorses the view that the war is for defence of imperialism and when fascism is defeated how the party proposes to give effect to its communist ideal. The various vicissitudes in his romantic career in China and Russia are not likely to appeal to the Indian mind and the lack of any constructive programme other than the fight against

1 *The Independent India*, November 10, 1940

fascism is a glaring defect.

S. Srinivasa Iyengar, who represented the purely personal type of socialism was another vehement critic. He could not cast his lot with any other socialist group. His advocacy of complete independence, one-party government, composite cabinet, equal representation for Hindus and Muslims etc., are illogical and hardly likely to draw the attention of serious thinkers. All these socialist parties ignore the fact that India has to achieve independence only through non-violence, because of the simple fact that Indian people are disarmed. The socialists can become the strongest party only if they can resist the tendency of faction and wordy dispute. Till now the Socialist party is too much preoccupied with endless talk about imperialism and revolution, instead of confining itself to a positive and practical programme of social work. While talking of mass contact, it has very rarely come into actual contact with the masses. And even the Kisan Sabha has not a comprehensive basis of action. Socialism if carried to the masses will indeed

educate and inspire them, but the Congress Socialist party has yet to learn the technique of propaganda. Socialism should not be limited to the literate urban classes but must be founded upon village organisations on the soviet model

Leaving aside for the moment matters of political strategy, the Socialist party must give up its role of barren opposition and can win an effective majority only in proportion to the concrete work it can turn out in the villages. Where modern civilization has not made its inroads into Indian villages there still prevails a sense of community, which can be transformed to communism. That the Socialist party in India has not produced an outstanding figure is to a considerable extent due to its failure to capture the imagination of the masses by touching upon their problems, which concern them intimately.

At the same time, Indian socialists must realize, as Nehru does, that no socialist programme on the model of highly industrialized countries like Great Britain or U. S. S. R. can be a success.¹ Consciously

1 Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography*, pp 366-368

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or unconsciously the socialist solution of the present problems must be adopted and the impossibility of proletarian revolution clearly shows that the Gandhian technique of personal sacrifice and intense propaganda is the only feasible way.

CHAPTER III

THE DEMOCRATIC WAY

Nehru has declared himself a socialist and a republican.¹ According to his reading of history, democracy for a long time was carrying out the tradition and the ideas of the French Revolution.² But, it failed to adapt itself to the new conditions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and in India many advanced politicians still talk in terms of the French Revolution and the Rights of Man. Nineteenth century was the century of democracy, a century when the Rights of Man of the French Revolution governed advanced thought but

1 Jawaharlal Nehru's Presidential Address to the Lahore Congress, 1929 ,

2 Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, p 530

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the post-war years of the twentieth century put an end to the great traditions of the nineteenth century.

Both communism and fascism have opposed and criticised democracy, though on entirely different grounds. Even England and France, the only countries where parliament functions, are outwardly democratic and their fascist activities take place in their dependencies and colonies.¹ Therefore, democracy fails when the vital needs which move peoples passions have to be faced.² So long as an apparently democratic procedure seems the purpose of the possessing classes they use it to their advantage to protect their own interests.

It is necessary to distinguish between two types of democracy, one enshrining liberty and the other equality. Social democrats have adopted the latter theory of democracy and communism. Though it might appear entirely alien to democracy as understood in England and the United States, yet it can

1 *Ibid*, p 826 See also Jawaharlal Nehru, *My Autobiography*, (American edition), Epilogue, 1941

2 John Corbin, in the *New York Times*, January 6, 1924, Book Review p. 11 says 'The present era may ultimately be known as the era which overthrew democracy'

be a true democracy to suit modern industrial conditions, where social justice is the chief desideratum

Democracy begins with freedom and ends with equality. The critics of Marxian socialism urge that by a levelling process on an economic plane the socialists kill human personality and hence negate democracy. The negation of negation is not anarchy as contended by some nor is it true that socialists by accepting democracy and defending freedom are insincere.¹

Democracy to-day has to fight against the oppression of capitalism in the economic sphere, against an inelastic parliamentary system in the political field and against nationalism in the international domain. Due to the stress of war, personal liberty is practically dead both in the democratic and totalitarian countries. A visitor to New York pointed out the statue of Liberty to a Frenchman, who replied "It is very very fine. In France we too build monuments to the illustrious dead."² If liberty

¹ Brij Naran, *Marxism Is Dead*

² Nicholas Murray Butler, *The Family of Nations*, pp 271-273 Colonel Knox recently stated that "Democracy is dead in Britain"

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is a moral principle equality is even more so. It cannot exist without social justice. Not only liberty but also equality depends upon self-discipline and self-control.

How political liberty is increasingly restricted by economic conditions is the commonplace of recent world history. It is now the fashion to assume that fascism and communism would one day come into conflict and the future of civilization would hang on the result. A tacit assumption of such critics is that parliamentary democracy would ultimately triumph and liberty can do the work of political reconstruction better, more justly, more open-mindedly and more progressively. If liberty will arm itself with argument, with action, with convincing demonstration of its power to do this, it will emerge successful in all ideological conflict.

But as Nehru has pointed out, real democracy has had no chance to exist so far. For, there is an essential contradiction between the capitalist system and democracy. Capitalism has made use of the democratic machinery to make its own position secure. Thus there is no equality under such a system

and even the liberty is so circumscribed by capitalist laws as to preserve economic inequalities¹ It is impossible to stop the advance of the mighty forces that are at work among the hundreds of millions of human beings. "In our own way," he says, "in our little corner of the world, we can make some slight difference to these world forces in space or direction"

In India the National Congress stands for democracy and equality. It must function democratically. The will of the majority must prevail, and the minority though it might not like the decisions arrived at must bow to them, unless, of course, it is a vital matter affecting a great principle. This is the way of democracy and any other would lead to absolute chaos²

1. See Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, Vol. II, p 464 'As the English kingship became in the nineteenth century, so parliaments will become in the twentieth, a solemn and empty pageantry. As then sceptre and crown, so now people's rights are paraded for the multitude, and all the more punctiliously the less they really signify.'

2 *The Hindu*, July 26, 1939 ; See also Edward P. Cheyney, *Law in History and other Essays*, Ch 1, 1927. He describes as one of the great laws of history "a law of democracy, a tendency for all governments to come under the people", R. M. Maciver *The Modern State*, p 340, 1926, "in spite of reverses, the main trend of the state . . . towards democracy."

CHAPTER IV

NEHRU AND THE INDIAN CONGRESS

The Indian National Congress represents the evolution of national consciousness from its very inception. Its policy has developed in the light of international affairs and local political events through a period of constitutional cooperation and agitation to that of passive resistance, and a definite method of action. From 1922 non-cooperation and non-violence became two aspects of the national struggle. This development was the logical outcome of a long period of

moderation and goodwill towards the British government.¹

Nehru entered the Congress in 1919 and came under the spell of the personality of Mahatma Gandhi. As he himself says, his vague ideas and yearnings had not been anchored to any particular ideology until he saw the extreme poverty of the masses and was convinced that the war against exploitation could be waged only through non-violent means. But such a strong personality could not surrender to all that Gandhi stood for without mental struggle. In 1921 he criticised the suspension of the Civil Disobedience movement by Gandhi, when independence, had almost been achieved.

From 1923 to 1925 Nehru was elected the General Secretary of the Congress and was responsible for organising the boycott of Simon Commission. He was so indispensable that though opposed to the All Parties Constitution, he was again made the General Secretary. Next step was investing all the

1. See Pattabhi Sitaramayya, *History of the Congress*, 1986. Y - G Krishnamurti, *Congress Souvenir* "The Development of Congress Polity," 1987.

power of the Congress as its President on Nehru. In 1929, the Lahore Congress passed the Independence Resolution mainly due to his advocacy. He made himself strong in the affections of the masses in such a unique way that he was identified with national aspirations.

Prison became a second home to him. His loyalty to the Congress never wavered, and the organisation owes as much to his shaping as to Gandhi. Fundamentally he is an advocate of non-violence though the religious part of his mind does not subscribe to it. He says that the Congress under Gandhi's leadership has laid great stress on non-violence and the conversion of the adversary rather than his coercion. Quite apart from the metaphysical aspect of the doctrine and its feasibility or otherwise in the final sense, there can be no doubt that non-violence has created a powerful feeling against civil conflict and in favour of peaceful methods. Non-violent non-cooperation gave self-respect and self-reliance to the masses. The habit of united action was developed and a consciousness of all-India unity was aroused.

Not merely the masses but also the educated classes underwent remarkable transformation and many of the virtues of war without its terrible evils were taught to the people.¹

As the accredited representative of the Congress, Nehru can be credited with giving the socialist turn to it. Secondly in the international sphere he is the ambassador of the Congress ideals. Thirdly, within the Congress fold he has been responsible for its exemplary sense of discipline and loyalty to the organisation. Fourthly, the goal of complete independence has no stronger champion than Nehru. His pen and tongue have been incessantly active in bringing into limelight the plight of the under-dog, whether in the village or in the mills, in Indian states or in Indian colonies.

Envisaging the whole of India he identifies it with the great human goal of social and economic equality with its forward move for ending all exploitation of nation by nation and clan by clan, to national freedom within the framework of an international coopera-

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru, *India and the World*, pp. 195-197, 1986.

tive socialist world federation. To him it is not an empty idealist creed as some people would believe, but within the range of practical politics of today.¹

To preserve the organic unity of the Congress while allowing for differences of opinion he has not hesitated to place the Congress above any personality. The Congress Socialist Party while endeavouring to radicalise the Congress programme and to direct that body towards the path of revolution did not realise the danger of breaking up the organisation. Nehru is opposed to all fissiparous tendencies because he feels that the Congress in its resolutions has anticipated all possibilities and as regards the pace and method holds that a proper diagnosis and careful plan of work are essential

The Congress constitution was changed to tighten up the organisation with a view to eliminating bogus membership and such other factors tending to destroy the purity of its ideals. The primary membership is confined to those members who once they

1 Jawaharlal Nehru, *India and the World*, p. 68

join the organisation will continue as such and safeguard against impersonation and fraudulent practices in elections have been introduced. Election of Congress delegates to various elective bodies depends upon membership for at least three consecutive years in order to keep out turn-coats and time-servers. No communal organisation or any other body which is anti-national and in conflict with the basic ideals of the Congress can be included in the Congress fold. Nehru was opposed to this drastic rule because that while it may be necessary to take disciplinary action against individual members it is desirable to avoid taking action against any organisation as such. The Kisan Sabha which is very powerful in Bihar and Andhra may come into conflict with the Congress. But it would be more in accordance with the structure and ideal of the Congress to exclude any organisation which indulges in activities considered definitely injurious to the welfare of the country by the Congress.¹

The All-India Congress Committee was

1 *The Hindu*, June 7, 1940

similarly re-constituted to make it more broad-based and more truly reflective of the Congress opinion in the country. Powerful cliques in the provincial capitals and other politically advanced areas would not be permitted to neglect rural interests. Therefore, while one-third of the total membership of the A. I. C. C. should be elected by the general body of the Congress delegates, by the single transferable vote, two-thirds should be elected on a territorial basis by the single distributive vote.

Nehru also proposed the building up of the Congress Civil Service and the establishment of provincial tribunals for deciding disputes. The Congress now uses much of its time in purely organisational work because election has become more complicated.¹ Therefore he suggested that a Congress organisation similar to a tribunal like Suba Adalat should be instituted to deal with elections and questions of disciplinary action. The United Provinces has tried to build up a kind of Congress Civil Service, majority of them engaged as paid secretaries, clerks,

1 *Ibid.*, June 3, 1940

auditors and instructors, who must be content with a small salary. Though Congressmen, they should be aloof from all politics.

Nehru occupies a place next only to Gandhi because of the wide knowledge of international affairs, sincerity and fixity of purpose and by the value of his sacrifices to the Congress. || Lin Yu Tang says that though it is difficult to be a star by the side of a planet of Gandhi's brilliance, Nehru has achieved it|| He compares Gandhi and Nehru to the female and male spirits. The former being basic, more enduring, planning and creating; the latter active, executing, and working for the present needs. He says Gandhi is not only too good for India but for the world itself.¹

The contrast between Gandhi and Nehru is that between the 'mystic' and the "humanist." The masses revere and adore Gandhi but they are stirred to action by Nehru. In every phase of Congress activity we see the impress of Nehru's personality and every resolution bears the mark of his

¹ Lin Yu Tang in his Foreword to *Nehru. The Rising Star of India*

ideology. When the full history of the Congress comes to be written, it will be found that Nehru has been responsible for some of the tremendous and momentous decisions that have shaped present history of India.

CHAPTER V

INDIAN FEDERATION

The problem of Indian federation engaged the attention of the Congress from 1919, though the first suggestion for a federation seems to have been made by the Gackwar of Baroda in 1917. The Congress appointed the Nehru Committee which submitted its Report in July 1928. The need for a common constitution for the whole country was stressed. The Report made it clear that the relationship between the states and the British government implies that they are in direct relation not with the King-in-person but with the King-in-Parliament. The real practical question is the preservation of treaty rights and such safeguards as the

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states have claimed. While permitting the maximum degree of autonomy in the local units there can be immediate grant of full responsible government to the British provinces until the Indian states chose to join the federation. The Report warned Britain of postponing the grant of Dominion Status even when the majority of the Indian states had not signified their assent to the federation ¹

But the All Parties Conference in 1928 was not a success because of the opposition of the Muslim League. From 1930 to 1935 the British government convened a series of Round Table Conferences, Committees and Committees and finally in 1935 the Government of India Act inaugurated the federation.

Nehru is an uncompromising enemy of the federation as envisaged in the Government of India Act, 1935. He says that one of the tragedies of history is the slowness with which people's mind adapt themselves to a changing environment. The war of 1914-18 and the Russian Revolution or the

¹ For details see V. G. Krishnamurti, *Indian States And The Federal Plan*, 1939

approaching world catastrophe seem not big enough to shake up the communalists and liberals from their lethargy and private obsessions. There is a vast difference of class and approach between the liberal in India, fearful of change and the votaries of revolutionary ideals. Between the two extremes there are many Congressmen but essentially with the same mental atmosphere. Federation cannot come to India in this shape and that because India has changed and the world has changed completely and the age of Round Table Conferences is lost already in the dim mists of antiquity.

Nehru though stoutly opposed to the Federal Act was willing to make an experiment of provincial autonomy and in 1936 when the Congress decided to contest the elections, he conducted a whirlwind propaganda throughout the country without sparing himself. When the Congress achieved complete victory in the elections a Convention was held at Delhi. Congress refused to accept office unless an assurance was given by the British government that the powers of the provincial ministers would

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remain unimpaired. Such an assurance was at last extended by Neville Chamberlain and in July 1937 the interim ministries were turned out and the Congress accepted office in Madras, Bombay North West Frontier provinces, Central provinces, Bihar, and Orissa. Assam also became a Congress province. Nehru in the Parliamentary Committee was greatly responsible for a uniform legislation regarding prohibition, Harijan uplift, elementary education, liberty of the press, revival of local administration, rural reconstruction and the question of reducing peasant indebtedness.

But provincial autonomy soon showed unsatisfactory features. In February 1938, the United provinces and Bihar ministries resigned on the question of political prisoners, until it was conceded that the ministers had the right to look into particular cases of political prisoners without the intervention of the Viceroy. Again in Orissa a crisis was threatened on the issue whether a civil servant subordinate to the minister could be appointed as governor. The provincial Congress ministries launched a pro-

gramme of rural reconstruction, prohibition, education and social reform. Even the bitter opponents of the Congress had to acknowledge the great success of prohibition in Madras, Bombay, Bihar and the United provinces. The demand for the formation of linguistic provinces was passed in all the Congress governments.

A similar united demand was made for the constituent assembly. On September 3, 1939, Britain declared war and India government perhaps anticipated the resignation of the Congress ministries and began to belittle and declare as illegal many of the Acts dealing with Prohibition, Employment Staff etc., and thus encroached upon provincial autonomy. The India Act Amending Bill passed in 1939, according to Dr. Kailasnath Katju expresses the hollowness of the British pretensions to govern India in terms of partnership. The Bill was not even formally referred to the Federal Court nor were any attempts made to consult the wishes of the Indian people. One of the objects of this Bill was to nullify the U P. Employment Tax Bill, which was entirely

within the competence of the provincial government. It is extraordinary that while recognising that the provinces have the right to impose tax on employment it yet provides that a tax on a particular employee shall not exceed a specified amount. Thus provincial autonomy was reduced to a mockery.

A bigger issue was the question of India's participation in the war. The Congress contended that India was declared a belligerent country with complete disregard for Indian opinion. The provincial Congress ministries carried resolutions through the local legislatures condemning the British attitude towards India and even in the Central Legislature, the Congress found an unexpected ally in the Muslim League and defeated the budget proposals.

Nehru has been a constant and consistent opponent of all autocracy whether in his own country or elsewhere. Therefore, his attitude towards the Indian states has been all along in condemnation of these 'medieval anachronisms.' He has lost no opportunity to refute extraordinary ideas about the value

of democracy expressed by some of the dewans. The dewan of a big Indian state said that there can be no question of radical reform when parliamentary democracy is dying everywhere. The same statesman said "I am sure that the conscience of the state feels that our present constitution is quite democratic enough for all practical purposes." Nehru caustically remarks "The conscience of Mysore presumably is a metaphysical abstraction for the ruler and his dewan. The democracy that prevails in Mysore is undistinguishable from autocracy."¹

The failure of parliamentary democracy according to Nehru, is not that it has gone too far but that it did not go far enough." The Indian states represent to-day probably the extreme type of autocracy existing in the world. Nehru as regards the Indian states does not wholly approve of Gandhi's

1. Jawaharlal Nehru. *An Autobiography*, pp. 501-502.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 530. See W. Ivor Jennings, *Parliamentary Democracy*, pp. 492-508, 1939. "The National government is truly national because it has a National opposition and the people are free. The leaders of other Oppositions are rotting in concentration camps or have joined the noble army of political martyrs—and the peoples are slaves."

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policy of non-interference in the internal administration of the states. He says that this hush hush policy has been adhered to by Gandhi in spite of the most extraordinary and painful occurrences in the states and in spite of wholly unprovoked attacks by the state governments on the Congress. Apparently the fear is that Congress criticism might offend the rulers and make it more difficult to convert them. Gandhi thinks that the princes, being Indians can be converted when once the fight against imperialism is over.

At the second R. T. C. Gandhi said that the Congress represents the whole of India and appealed to the princes to grant fundamental rights which would go a long way to conciliate their subjects. In 1935 the All-India Congress Committee recognised the rights of the people of the Indian states no less than the people of British India have an inherent right to Swaraj. Even in their own interest the princes will be well advised to establish at the earliest possible moment full responsible government within the states. But the struggle must necessarily be con-

ducted by the states' peoples themselves. Again in 1936, at the Lucknow Congress the same resolution was reiterated. When the A. I. C. C. at Calcutta expressed its emphatic protest against the ruthless policy of repression in the Mysore State and also the suppression of civil rights and liberties by denying the elementary rights of speech, assembly and association Gandhi declared that the Mysore Resolution was *ultra vires* of the resolution of non-interference and opposed to the tradition and policy of the Congress.

At Haripura the problem of the states again came to the fore and the Congress under Gandhi's guidance went back to the traditional policy and placed the burden on the states' peoples themselves. But soon developments in Rajkot, Jaipur, Hyderabad and Mysore proved that the problem of the states can no longer be isolated. When the Rajkot ruler refused to act on his promise, Gandhi felt that it was a moral issue and therefore entered on a fast in support of the Rajkot Praja Mandal, until the ruler had to accept the conditions.

As President of the Indian States' Peoples' Conference, Nehru, while indicating that the Haripura resolution as having achieved its purpose in bringing the people of the Indian states in line with the British provinces pointed out that the struggle of the states' people was part of a bigger struggle.¹ The Indian states system has been propped up by British imperialism for its own purposes. The claims of the Indian states to be sovereign and of their treaties with the paramount power to be sacrosanct and inviolable has been criticised and refuted. Nehru says that it is fantastic to expect the people to live in their chains of slavery imposed upon them by force and fraud. Neither history nor constitutional law gives any justification for the theory of the independence of the states. There is no independence in the states and there is going to be none because India is one. The Indian states system is doomed

Nehru enumerates the absurdities of some of the action of the princes. In an important state in Rajputana, type-writers are

1 *The Hindu*, February 15, 1939

discouraged. In Kashmir there is a monstrous ordinance framed on the lines of the Ordinance promulgated for the Burma Rebellion some years ago. In the premier state of Hyderabad liberty is non-existent and hundreds of students for singing "*Vande Mataram*" have been expelled. In Rajkot the people appeared to have won but the rejoicing was too soon and due to British pressure the plighted word of the ruler was broken. In Jaipur the political department reigns supreme. In the Orissa states the reaction of the British power to the regrettable murder of a British officer is significant. There was no rebellion or aggression but all the might of the paramount power was brought to bear even on the primitive Gonds. There was a wholesale migration of the persecuted people from these states. In Travancore, the dewan has distinguished himself by trying to discredit a powerful people's movement.

It is not the communal problem which comes in the way of reforms in the states for the same condition prevails in a predominantly Hindu state like Hyderabad and

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predominantly Muslim state like Kashmir. In Hyderabad there is the lowest level of civil liberty in India which is not the reaction to any aggressive movement but has been for long a normal state of affairs.

In February 1939, the Indian States' Peoples' Conference passed a resolution repudiating the claims of the princes to treaty rights operating against the best interests of the people and demanded that the paramount power should discharge its obligations to bring about a change in the government of the states. By another resolution, the Working Committee of the Conference transformed itself into a Standing Committee of the Congress and proposed that only those states with a population exceeding 20 lakhs or a revenue of over 50 lakhs can be considered as units of the federal scheme.

Nehru says that he does not want conflict but in this dissolving age conflict surrounds us at every step. The brightest hope for the future comes from the awakening in the states. The freedom of the states people is indeed a big question. But it is part of the larger freedom of India. The time has

approached when the final solution has to come—the constituent assembly of all the Indian people forming the constitution of a free and democratic India.¹

¹ *Presidential Address to the All-India States' Peoples Conference, Ludhiana, February, 15, 1939.*

CHAPTER VI

MINORITIES AND SWARAJ

The Congress resolution on the National Demand declares afresh the solemn resolve to achieve independence for the nation and to have a constitution framed through a constituent assembly, elected by the people, without any interference by a foreign authority. In elucidating this demand Nehru says that it is based on democracy as the Congress aims at the establishment of a democratic state in India. It means full protection to minority rights and interests. With proper protection and safeguards for the minorities, democracy is the fairest form of government. The majority can never be converted into a minority except by a

fascist or military clique.¹ The Congress is always prepared to consider the communal or minority question so as to arrive at a satisfactory solution. But it cannot permit any proposal opposed to Indian unity and democratic ideal.

The Muslim League has sponsored the idea of Pakistan, a fantastic plan first associated with Muhamad Iqbal. It is proposed that the so-called Muslim provinces—Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan—be formed into a single unit and not content with this the seven zones scheme has been put forward by Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan.² He says that some form of federation is indispensable and the only way to solve the communal problem is to have a national goal for the persecuted minorities. He is obsessed with the notion that an All-India federation binds the minorities hand and foot and delivers them to the

1. *The Hindu*, October 25, 1939.

2 *Ibid*, August 1, 1939 Other schemes have been put forward by the Nawab of Mamdot. Dr Abdul Latif, Mr. Rizwan Wallah, Dr Afzal Hussain Kadri, Khan Bahadur Kifartullah, Mr. Asadulla, Mr. Rahmat Ali, the Muslim Students' Federation, Prof Zafuri Hasan, Mohammad Anzal Hasan Quadri and Dr. Ambedkar.

tender mercies of the majority. He contends that a domineering central government will gradually undermine the authority and independence of the units and thus reduce provincial autonomy to a farce.

But he ignores the basic truth that a strong central government is as necessary as provincial autonomy for safeguarding against injustice to the public. He further proposes to divide India into seven zones and have regional legislatures for each. By this it is hoped that Punjab which has now only a slight Muslim majority would be strengthened by the neighbouring Muslim zones. East Assam is to be dragged into the sphere of Bengal to obtain a Muslim majority. Further the whole principle of majority is cast aside in the case of Hyderabad which is predominantly Hindu. The Hindu provinces should federate with the Muslim provinces and in the central legislature the members of the local legislatures of the regional zones should be represented. The Muslims who are only 22 per cent. of the total population of India must be given one-third of the seats while the other communities

should have the same weightage. In the army because Muslim personnel is predominant it should remain untouched. The federal government must be composed of ministers representing regional and communal interests.

The Working Committee of the Muslim League adopts long resolutions about consulting the wishes of Islamic countries before defining its attitude towards war as if the other Islamic countries have any regard for Indian Muslim opinion. The League is irrevocably opposed to any federal objective which under the guise of democracy and parliamentary system must result in majority rule. It says a democratic constitution is highly unsuited to the genius of the Hindus. The Muslim League unable to prevent the Punjab and Bengal governments offering unconditional and whole-hearted cooperation to Britain in the war gives expression in intemperate language to its criticism of the Congress.¹ It set up the Pirpur

¹ The Muslim League reviling the Congress ministries declared "These developments have established beyond any doubt that it has resulted wholly in a permanent communal majority and the domination of the Hindus over the Muslim



Committee¹ to investigate the grievances of the Muslims in the Congress provinces and organised a day of "Deliverance." But the Committee could not find any substantial evidence for the emotional grievances and even Fazlul Huq in his lucid moments has admitted that he could not find support for a single criticism against the Congress ministry in Madras

Further it is alleged that the Muslims and the Hindus belong to totally different races, religions and cultures. Nehru exposes this fiction of antagonistic races and cultures. He says that the talk of Hindu and Muslim nations opens up the fascinating vista of history and speculation. Politically, the idea of the Muslim nation within a nation and not even compact but vague and indeterminate is absurd. Economically, it is so fantastic that it is hardly worth any

minorities, whose life and liberty and property and honour are in danger and even their religious rights are being assailed and annihilated every day under the Congress governments in various provinces."

1 "The Purpur Committee tramped the country from one end to another hunting for grievances, but the bag was hardly impressive. As the Congress has asked Britain to make an unequivocal declaration in favour of Indian freedom, was it proper for the League to rush in with what looks suspiciously like a dementia?" (*The Hindu*, September, 19, 1939)

consideration. To talk of a Muslim nation means the denial of the modern sense of nationality altogether. It means the discarding of modern civilization, the acceptance of autocratic government and foreign rule and an indisposition to face economic realities. So also the ideas of Hindu and Muslim cultures are radically untrue. The day of national cultures is passing off. The real struggle to-day in India is not between the two cultures but with progressive ideas. Those who are desirous of preserving Indian culture whatever it may mean, need not worry about Hindu culture but should oppose the giant from west. Personally Nehru has no doubt that all attempts to resist scientific and industrial civilization are bound to fail.¹

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru urges the minorities for a previous settlement of internal differences before asking Great Britain to frame an Indian constitution. He accuses the Congress of being fascist and authoritarian but illogically says that the Muslim League is the only authoritative and representative organisation of the Muslims in India. He

1. Jawaharlal Nehru : *An Autobiography*, pp. 467, 470.

demands that no constitution should be imposed without getting the full approval of the Muslim League. He has no alternatives to suggest and dismisses the proposition that any minority has the right to hold up the progress of the country as merely a theoretical objection. But even Jinnah does not like this new ally. For, he hotly resents the idea that the Muslims are "unpatriotic."

As Nehru says, it is the communal leaders, Hindu or Muslim, who are political reactionaries first. If the communal problem is the major issue in their minds, they are thinking of British imperialism continuing permanently. They have failed to realise that communalism is one of the inevitable offshoots of imperialism.¹ The Hindu Maha-

¹ Churchill (September 1941) "By the declaration of August 1940, to help India to obtain free and equal partnership . . . subject of course our responsibilities to its many creeds, races and interests"

(Mr Jinnah's) is the spirit of an angry man who has too long played the part of a dictator, but who realises that the challenge to his authority is daily growing and the chances of his favourite theories and schemes being accepted by others including the British, are being imperilled everyday

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru

Divide and rule has been Great Britain's proud ill-conceived motto. It is the British statesmen who are responsible for the divisions in India's ranks, and divisions will continue so long as British sword holds India under bondage

Mahatma Gandhi

sabha is always professing to be fully nationalist and democratic. But the test of this profession comes when a democratic solution appears to injure the interests of the upper-class Hindus. It stands for majority rule but it has consistently opposed the separation of Sind against the declared wishes of the majority because the economic interests of the minority were threatened. Further it has championed the cause of the Hindu princes forgetting that they are the tools of British imperialism and as reactionary as possible. Nehru remarks that it was extraordinary to see how at the Round Table Conferences the Muslim League and the Mahasabha tried to out-beat each other for the support of the most dangerous elements in British politics.

The importance of nationality in the state is due to the fact that ultimately it is the

The recent pose of the Muslim extremists that they are an oppressed minority is merely ridiculous. In every burning issue of Indian politics creed is an irrelevance. The real divisions are peasants, labourers and debtors, landlords, employers and users. No one has ever questioned the claims of Muslims to equal rights, civil, political and cultural, for these the Hindus offer every imaginable guarantee. Theirs was never a persecuting religion.

The New Statesman and Nation.

basis of political coherence.¹ The nation is a population of ethnic unity inhabiting a territory of the geographic unity.² Misconceptions regarding race, language, religion and common historical traditions as the basis for nationality have given rise to different theories. More than race, language may be an integrating factor.³ But even common language is not the final test as in the case of Switzerland and Russia. Religion, thought to be more important than race or language is no longer considered as necessary for national unity.⁴ A common historical tradition seems to be an only sound basis for unifying the nation.⁵ In

1 D P Heatley *Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law* See Ch "The Plebiscite, Nationality and the state in International Affairs," 1921, "There is a nationalism that is exclusive, and that separates, as well as a nationalism that unites and incorporates. There is the nationalism of enthusiasm, partly fed by pride in the past. A nationalism of this type contributes little to a true international understanding."

2 J W Burgess *Political Science and Comparative Constitutional Law*, Vol I, p 1, 1938 A N Holcombe, *The Foundations of the Modern Commonwealth*, p 181, 1923

3 C J H Hayes *Essays on Nationalism*, p 13

4 R C Brooks *Civic Training in Switzerland*, 1930

5 C H McIlwain *The Growth of Political Thought in the West*, pp 392-393, 1932

Says Prof Holcombe "Nationality regarded as a force in modern politics is a corporate sentiment, a kind of fellow-feeling or mutual sympathy, relating to a definite home country, and binding together members of a common group, irrespective of differences in religion, economic interests, or social position, more intimately than any other similar sentiment."

theory American and French revolutions appear to be movements for securing the recognition of rights but ultimately national unity was the prevailing factor.¹

The minority problem in Europe has been solved by a Declaration of Fundamental Rights as a part of the constitution. The system of communal representation as it now obtains in India has made the communities rigid and reactionary. The minority rights might be recognised as in Canada by full provision in the Act to be enforced by Courts. But the fundamental problem is the need for social and economic planning. Therefore, Nehru says that a constituent assembly is the best from the point of view of minority interests. The Congress has laid down definite provisions to safeguard these interests but despite all this if the idea of a constituent assembly is opposed we have to conclude that the idea of Indian freedom itself is opposed. The fantastic scheme for the partition of India ignores Indian history and culture as well as the

¹ Lord Acton • *The History of Freedom and other Essays*, p. 275.

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present conditions in India and the world. When there is a demand all over the world for a closer union among nations, it is our misfortune that there are some elements on whom the lesson of history and even the tragedies of the present day have been completely lost ¹

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru in the Foreword contributed to *Constituent Assembly and Indian Federation*, 1940. Cf *The Tragedy of Jinnah* By Kailash Chandra

CHAPTER VII

ECONOMIC PLANNING IN INDIA

Socialism claims to be the economic complement of democracy. The economic basis of socialism is a collectivism which includes private property, land and capital and places them under some form of joint ownership. Its merits are that in industrial production and in art highest excellence can be reached, a fair opportunity is thrown open for all and rights of the individual and the state are reconciled.¹

1. See L. T. Hobhouse · *Liberalism*, pp 167-174, 1911. A. J. Hobson · *Crisis of Liberalism*, pp 138-156, Ramsay Muir : *Liberalism and Industry*, Ch VII, 1920, R. H. Tawney · *The Acquisitive Society*, 1921, Sidney and Beatrice Webb · *The Decay of the Capitalist Civilization*, 1923, W. W. Willoughby · *Social Justice*, Ch IV · *Report of the Director, International Office*, 1934, *Labour in the League System* 1934. "Planning is the outgrowth of a social philosophy which frankly places some sort of social organization above the will of the individual."

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Socialism criticises the existing economic and social order and it is regarded as a phase of the struggle of the labouring classes to emancipate themselves.

In the nineteenth century the movements in France and England were associated with Liberals and radicals but in the next stage of development socialism assumed an international aspect. The influence of socialistic ideas is clearly seen in the roused consciousness of the masses and in thinking internationally.

Nehru believes that only a socialist order can resolve the conflict about the basic structure of the state or society. Economic and social planning must first be established within the national boundaries and eventually in the world, with a controlled production and distribution of wealth for the public good.¹ If political or social institutions stand in the way of such a change they have to be removed. Such a change may partly be forced or expedited by the impact of world forces but it can hardly take place without the largest measure of

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography*, p. 523.

support in the country. Conspiratorial violence of a small group will not serve the abiding interest of the nation.

Therefore Nehru's method is non-violence and his goal a socialist order throughout India. Under capitalism all activities being left to individual initiative and chance there is no co-ordination between different producers or competing workers. There is no planning nationally and this results in the very opposite of planning. He refers to the Russian plan and how the authorities had to struggle against backward conditions, vested interests and low standards of living. The spirit behind the plan was the spirit of science. It meant the application of the methods of science to economic and social affairs.¹ Soviet Russia has adopted the method of a national policy

1 Jawaharlal Nehru : *Glimpses of World History*, pp 831-835 See also Stephen King Hall. *Our Own Times* (1913-1938) "Young Russia was socialist, it knew no other worlds, and the drive, the push, the enthusiasm, the sacrifices which were at the bottom of the Five-Year Plan were rooted in the youth of the country", Bou's Brutzkus : *Economic Planning in Soviet Russia* "The art of planning does not reconcile itself to the existing world, but to change it. It creates a new world for itself actively" W P Coates and Zelda K Coates *From Czarism to Stalin Constitution* Y G. Krishnamurti *Constituent Assembly and Indian Federation*, pp. 57-67, 1940. W H Chamberlain, *The Soviet Planned Economic Order*, 1931.

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of building up socialism in a single country and avoiding complication outside. But as in the recent case of Finland, Bukovina and other parts of Russia which once belonged to Russia, her policy is to acquire those provinces which due to circumstances of war she had been forced to give up. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have come into the Federation of the Soviet states and the same economic planning has been introduced to those countries bringing a great measure of social justice.

As regards the capitalist powers Soviet Russia is avoiding all entanglements in the war and trying to keep peace at all costs. Therefore Nehru considers unity as essential for national planning.

The constituent assemblies in Russia, Estonia and other countries were organised in the political faith of national unity. The critics of socialism in India have argued that socialism and economic planning can never succeed in this country because there is no industrial proletariat. But in Russia the revolution came first and the object of the new economic policy was to create

the industrial proletariat.¹ Class-unity, nationalism and a strong government are necessary if economic planning is to be a success. Marxian socialism in its entirety is not applicable to India. Firstly because, a small industrial proletariat cannot fight British imperialism. Secondly the present social system in India must first be gradually changed through non-violent methods before complete equality is achieved. But it is illogical to argue that because there is extreme pressure of population on land there is no analogy between Russia and India since it has been proved that by proper planning and starting of key industries a redistribution of the population may relieve the too great pressure on land. It is said that collectivism is impossible in India because if all the cultivable land is equally distributed each worker

1 Michael Farbrinan · *Russia's Five-Year Plan*, 1931

G. F. Grinke · *The Five-Year Plan of the Soviet Union*, 1930

Calvin B. Hoover · *The Economic Life of Soviet Russia*, 1931

For an official account of the results accomplished under the Five-Year Plan, *Summary of the Fulfilment of the First Five-Year Plan*, (Moscow, State Planning Commission of the U.S.S.R., 1933)

would get only two or three acres.¹ Again, Indian industries would be ruined by exclusive state ownership. State capitalism may be worse than individual capitalism.

A third argument put forward by the critics is the lack of class-unity. The abolition of land-lordism would merely result in a class-war and according to M. N. Roy, China is too backward, for socialist revolution. To these arguments effective reply is that the full implications of economic and social planning have not been understood. Marx may have been wrong in predicting a revolution in England and assuming that an industrial proletariat was necessary for a revolution.

India did possess a form of communism in the villages and therefore lack of education and ignorance of industrial technique is no bar to a revolution.² In

1 See Willard Price, *Where are You Going, Japan?* 1933, pp. 11, 16 "Intensively cultivated. That brings us to the second point in the Japanese farmer's credo. The first is that what the farmer needs he should produce. The second is that intensive effort must be applied. Only so can he make two acres do the work of several score. How could there be so much work on so little land? Only by regarding each sprig as a crown jewel."

2. M. N. Roy: *My Experiences in China*, pp. 95-96 "China is much too backward for a socialist revolution."

China the poor condition of the Chinese peasant has not prevented him from subscribing to communist principles and joining the communist armies in the fight against Japan. That real state ownership of industries will surely ruin them is an unwarranted conclusion because even the capitalist countries under the stress of war have taken over the management of all essential industries and are successfully working them.

To say that the interests of different sets of workers are not identical because there is no possibility of world revolution, is to ignore the tremendous international forces that have been released by the present war. In the struggle for power the fear that a few leaders will capture all the key positions and thus frustrate the dictatorship of the proletariat is baseless as long as India sticks to the principles of democracy and non-violence.¹

1 Brj Naram . *Marxism Is Dead*, pp 259-262

Q 103 What is the strength of the industrial proletariat in India? Keeping in view its numbers, its heterogeneous character, its lack of education and general enlightenment, and its ignorance of industrial technique and political administration,

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Indian socialism does not necessarily mean a corporate state as in Italy and Germany nor complete state capitalism as in Russia if we follow the traditions and the genius of the Indian people aiming at a just distribution and a planned production according to Indian conditions. The possibility of socialism is no doubt rendered doubtful by many factors at present and unless Swaraj is won no economic organisation can be effective. But it does not mean that there should be no planning with a view to future possibility because social and economic questions are entirely a part of the political problem.

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- is it possible for our industrial proletariat to win Swaraj and establish its dictatorship?
- Q 104 Is it not true that under Indian conditions 'dictatorship of the proletariat means dictatorship of leaders of the proletariat' Is it not true that the struggle is for leadership?
- Q 106 If the interests of workers of different nations are not identical, if no world proletarian revolution is not maturing or can ever happen, if no world socialist society can ever come into being—in brief—if international socialism is dead, does it not follow that socialism must be 'national'?
- Q 112 "Is there sense in dividing the country into parties and factions on the question of our economic constitution under swaraj, when no swaraj has been won and when, in fact, there are not the faintest signs of any real struggle for swaraj?"
- Q 116 "What reasons are there for thinking that the class struggle will achieve freedom for India when it has been successful in accomplishing the ruin of independent countries?"

As to the danger of dividing the country on the socialist issue such danger must not frighten us because in any case and at any time the vested interests will put up a fight. Civil war may no doubt weaken a country in its fight against a foreign government as in China but the socialist believes that the unity of the country can be achieved and foreign aggression resisted by adopting socialist principles. Even more, Indian socialism believing in the principle of non-violence hopes for the conversion of the adversary and thus mitigate the evil effects of a civil or international war.

Nehru, as the Chairman of the National Planning Committee, therefore, has urged the necessity for a thorough investigation of the whole economic and social problem and 29 sub-committees were set up to report on the various aspects. Over two hundred experts served on these committees. As it is a non-official body with no statutory right to secure the information it needs, the handicaps it suffers from are numerous. All but one provincial government have



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co-operated in its work. The Bengal government has won the unique distinction of keeping aloof from the Committee while the Central government is observing *non-possumus* attitude. It is sad that the non-co-operation on the part of the Central government has made the Committee to function over a large field of economic policy *in vacuo*. The provincial investigations that are now in progress will certainly not allow the provincial governments to rest on their oars till the national plan emerges.

Regarding the general principle for the control of industries, Nehru says in his Memorandum¹ that defence-industries, key-industries, and public utilities should be either state-owned or controlled. It must be noted that in regard to defence-industries they must be owned and controlled by the state. The majority in the committee favoured the state-control of key-industries. It was decided that public utilities should be owned by the state on the model of London Transport

1. *The Indian Express*. February 13, 1940.

Board. As central control has a determining influence on national planning, the measure of control should vary with the industry in question. An autonomous public trust is recommended as the agency in state-owned industries. The state may appoint directors to see that the industry is co-ordinated with the national planning scheme. The establishment of new vested interests is opposed and in the event of a private industry being taken over by the state, fair compensation will be paid. Mother industries and cottage industries will be co-ordinated in the national plan.

In this plan there is no attempt to lure the people with glittering prospects of Russia or the United States of America. It is also realised that unless India gets freedom and unity no planning will be effective. India must achieve socialism only through constructive planning and non-violent methods. At present there is not the slightest hope of bringing about a violent revolution. Socialism in spite of impatient critics must be evolutionary.

Even after full political power has been

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won legislation must remain the powerful method of bringing about a change in social scene.¹ As regards agriculture ultimately private rights involving sale and mortgage should disappear. Small-scale production cannot be eliminated altogether but co-operative effort can be properly encouraged by village organisations which will have power to control the disposal of land and proprietary interests. Reasonable time-limit should be given before extinguishing individual rights. In the transition period, various legislative methods may be employed to prevent fragmentation of land, wasteful cultivation, heavy indebtedness and illiteracy. As regards cottage industries textile production by handlooms is now calculated to meet one-third of the whole demand for cloth, whereas mills have captured two-thirds of the market. To revive hand-spinning and weaving it is necessary to have a central control which can market the goods but since complete industrialization seems to be the final goal by the logic of world events such cottage indus-

1 K Santhanam • *India's Road to Socialism*, 1940

tries will have to occupy a supplementary position.

Most formidable obstacle to the spread of socialism is the general poverty and ignorance of the masses. This can be overcome by a state plan of industries and intense propaganda. Propaganda itself will acquire reality by constructive work. The literate, unemployed middle-class youths who are too susceptible to vague and dangerous ideas should be mobilised in the work of national uplift. There can be no question of coercion or using physical force. Gandhi has provided a unique technique in satyagraha. Satyagraha implies mass-action, personal example, the code of death rather than surrender, intense propaganda and the cult of simplicity.

To those who believe in the inevitability of socialism through non-violent means as Nehru does, it is impossible to go back deliberately to a rural economy and it is equally fantastic to increase the tempo of socialisation beyond certain limits.¹ The

1. Jawaharlal Nehru : *An Autobiography*, pp 362, 523. See also George H. Soule . *A Planned Society*, 1932. *The Coming*

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salvation of India therefore lies only through the Gandhian technique which will bring about a radical and peaceful change throughout the country.

American Revolution, 1934, and Stuart Chase *The Tragedy of Waste*, 1925 *Men and Machines*, 1929 *A New Deal*, 1932. *The Economy of Abundance*, 1934

The tendency of our age seems to be that action and science must be perfectly harmonized in the realization of a planned society in which economic control will be vested in the representatives of the masses

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CHAPTER VIII

SOCIAL REFORM

As a social reformer Nehru approaches the problems confronting India as a politician, because the social evils are perpetuated by foreign domination. He says that this extraordinary spirit of toleration of social evils in India is obviously not due to any partiality for them by the British government. They do not care much about the removal of social evils because it may interfere with their work of exploiting the country.¹ There is also the danger of irritating various classes and in order to seek strange allies British rule supports extreme

1 Jawaharlal Nehru · *An Autobiography*, p 382, 1936.

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communalists, religious reactionaries and obscurantists. The Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Sanatanists have in various degrees expressed their loyalty to the British government. Why the question of social reform has not engaged the attention of the Congress to the same extent as the political question is, according to Nehru, because that the Congress and non-official organisations cannot do much. Secondly, it is so obsessed with nationalism that all its attention is absorbed in winning political freedom.¹

Nehru believes that the state is capable of converting the masses to any social reform if alien elements are removed and economic changes are given preference. Social evils have a history and a background in the dim past and intimate connection with the economic structure. Nehru believes that many of the social evils are the direct result of the economic system. Any scientific consideration of the problem must go down to the roots and seek out the cause. Between economic and religious

1 *Ibid*, p 888

vested interests it is difficult to see which is more complicated to remove. Both of them want to maintain the *status quo* and an abhorrence to change.¹ Nehru points out that before taking up any particular line of reform it is necessary to have a general objective, a social structure which assures work and security to all adults, provides education, equitable distribution of necessities and amenities and individual freedom for self-development.

With such a socialist background changes can gradually be introduced and the problem of education will be the duty of the government. Public opinion should be converted to accept the changes proposed. To avoid suspicion that the changes are in favour of a particular class or community it should be declared that such a reform would be introduced only with the full consent of the other communities. If by a proposal a community thinks itself endangered there should be no forced reform. There is a great need for a uniform civil code. Nehru

1 Jawaharlal Nehru : "The Content of Social Welfare," *The Social Welfare*, September, 1940.

considers that it is necessary to extend the Civil Marriage Act to cover marriages between any two persons irrespective of their religion or lack of religion. Records of all marriages should be kept so that people must come to think in terms of civil marriages. Divorce laws especially for Hindus are necessary based on the democratic principle of equal rights and obligations.

The problem of untouchability and Harijans is comparatively simple for a socialist like Nehru.¹ To Gandhi untouchability is a blot on Hinduism and as a believer in *Varnasrama* he thinks that the untouchables may be classed as Sudras and thus drawn into the Hindu fold. Whereas Gandhi approaches the problem in an essentially religious spirit and economic, political and social considerations are secondary, Nehru looks upon the Harijans as the exploited. Economically speaking the Harijans are the landless proletariat and therefore the economic solution will remove

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru *Presidential Address to the Lucknow Congress*, Lucknow, 1936.

the social barrier raised by custom and tradition. Under socialism there can be no differentiation and victimization. His reading of Indian history is to the effect that India deliberately built up her social structure on inequality. The tragic consequence of this policy is that millions of her people had little opportunity to grow up.

The language problem has engaged the attention of Nehru and in support of the Congress resolution making Hindustani the language of the country he says that the Congress permits both scripts, Nagari and Urdu. In the Fundamental Rights Resolution of the Karachi Congress, the principle of linguistic areas is recognised and protection is assured to the culture, language and script of the minorities. He thinks that there are only a dozen main languages in India and Hindustani, a joint product of Hindus and Muslims and prevailing over a greater area than any other language has got the right to be the national language. But he is not in favour of making it the primary language in the south, because Hindustani must be

standardised for northern area and at the same time it must be made a second language for the rest of the country so as to forge a linguistic link.

Foreign languages like English are essential to keep in touch with modern thought. But primary and secondary education should be in the vernaculars. Regarding the controversy between Urdu and Hindi he points out that it is mainly a question of script and partly of the classical background of Persian or Sanskrit. An even more vital difference is the difference between the highly polished courtly language and the simple language of the rural areas. The predominance of the city must go and though the language may not be so polished and courtly it will gain in vitality and power of expression.¹ The simple common language of the people is limited to a few thousand words. But to produce a high-class literature a rich and varied vocabulary is essential and must be drawn from the classical as well as modern languages. Whatever language is adopted by the masses, automatically with speech

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, *India And the World*, p 209.

and writing, it acquires simplicity and force.

Nehru is attracted by basic English and its extreme simplification may be usefully applied to Hindustani. There is no doubt that Hindustani is going to be the common language of India and in the interests of unity we must not sacrifice cultural variations if we want to produce a rich and varied life bubbling over with abounding vitality. It is unfortunate when such cultural questions are raised political reactionaries take the lead.

Nehru asks—what is culture? He recognises that in the modern world there is a spiritual crisis, a conflict of values, a questioning of old beliefs. The same crisis of the spirit is seen in India where the past holds back the people.¹ To him the old culture offers no solution of modern problems; neither does western culture which lost its glamour after the nineteenth century. Therefore his mind is attracted by the new civilization that is growing in Russia, which in spite of some dark patches offers hope and world peace. India may solve her

1. Jawaharlal Nehru *An Autobiography*, pp. 429-430

spiritual problems by joining this order but in its own way, making the structure fit in the genius of her people.

Nehru shows that Indian culture in spite of poverty and degradation produced nobility and greatness. India had "a beauty wrought from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions." Through long ages she gathered much wisdom and trafficked with strangers. In spite of humiliation and sorrows she clung to her immemorial culture, drew strength and vitality from it and shared it with other lands. In spite of political slavery, economic degradation, ignorance and superstition India never forgot the inspiration of her wisest children at the dawn of history. The seers of the Upanishads had demanded not a personal relief from suffering in the present or a place in a paradise to come but light and understanding. The constant prayer was "lead me from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality."

Religion to Nehru means primarily ethics.

He is much fascinated by the Chinese Taoism which is fundamentally ethical and at the same time tinged with scepticism.¹ He hates all organised religions because in the past they have become the tool of capitalism. He says it is remarkable how the church has served the purpose of British imperialism and given both capitalism and imperialism a moral and "Christian" covering. Protestantism succeeded remarkably so far as this world was concerned. But it failed when sentimentality and big business began to dominate it.

In the organised religions, moral standards have no relation to social needs but are based on a highly metaphysical doctrine of sin. Therefore, the word religion has lost its precise significance. To him religion means the inner development of the individual and the evolution of his consciousness in a certain direction considered good. In the modern western civilization outward development has far outstripped inward change. But this does not prove that in the backward countries inner evolution is

1. Jawaharlal Nehru *An Autobiography*, p. 377.

greater. External development and freedom are necessary even for inner development. He understands Gandhi's technique of conversion in order to change the external environment, to mean that to achieve the end the means also should be such as to avoid waste of effort and perhaps result even in greater degradation both inner and outer

To Gandhi religion is something intensely personal and intuitive. But Nehru is an extrovert. He is attracted by Dewey's definition of religion as whatever introduces genuine perceptions into the piecemeal and shifting episodes of existence. Any activity pursued in behalf of an ideal because of its conviction, of enduring value is religious in quality. Nehru is also a whole-hearted supporter of Romain Rolland's view that religion is a quality of thought and it is not the object which it determines, the nature of it. A fearless search for truth, single-minded sincerity may be called religious. For these presuppose a faith higher than that of the current society and higher even than the life of humanity as a whole.

Atheists and sceptics who are true to themselves can join in the march of the Grand Army of the religious soul. Nehru with characteristic humility says that he cannot presume to fulfil the conditions laid down by Romain Rolland but on these terms he is prepared to be an humble camp-follower of the Grand Army.¹

Nehru having spent a considerable period of his life² in prison has naturally directed his attention to the question of prison reform. He has shown that Indian Penal laws are punitive rather than corrective and deterrent. The psychological effect produced especially on the young is so demoralising that the after-care of the prisoner becomes a complicated problem. A terrible monotony, infliction of whipping, hard labour, lack of contact with the outside world make the prisoner anti-social. He points out that

1. Jawaharlal Nehru : *An Autobiography*, p. 380.

2. Jawaharlal Nehru has courted imprisonment six times and has lived within the circuits of prison wall for eight years.

He was imprisoned in	.	1921
Released and again jailed in	..	1922
Imprisoned for leading Salt Satyagraha in	.	1930
Released next year, but again imprisoned in	..	1932
Released and again imprisoned in	.	1934
Imprisoned under the Defence Act	.	1940-1
Released and again imprisoned in	.	1942

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in all civilised countries efforts are made to create a homely atmosphere as in Latvia, and that prisoner is not there for punishment but for reformation as in Russia.¹

In India the penal system is not based on the fact that crime may be due to special reasons capable of state control and further that the harsh penal code does not improve social morals.² The same rule is applied to political as well as to non-political offences. By denying the simplest human necessities and by making the dependants on the prisoner to suffer misery and starvation, the present system produces more criminal types, who may not fear even the death penalty.

Imprisonment for life to a sensitive man would be more terrible than the death penalty. Capital punishment tends to the brutalisation of the community and the state itself begins to indulge in disorderly violence, by the deliberate infliction of torture of the mind and the body.³ To expect from a penal system the creation of a law-abiding nation is grotesque. Force cannot

1. Jawaharlal Nehru *India and the World*, pp. 126-127.

2. *Ibid.*, p 128

3. *Ibid.*, p 141.

establish the rule of law which can be secured only by improving the standards of living, of education, and by setting a good example. The Indian Penal Code closely follows the system in England which is still very backward. The vagueness of many of the laws gives a great latitude to the judges, who are influenced by political considerations. Emile Durkheim says that only such criminal actions as are capable of being defined in precise terms ought to be made punishable.¹ Even from the point of view of legal policy there is no uniformity of opinion as to whether attempted suicide, adultery and sexual crimes should not be treated as criminal offences. A moralised penal reform that embodies wrong ethical ideas is surely worse than one that makes no moral claims. A uniform moral standard is wrong in itself showing all the characteristics of the Nazi regime.²

A retributive attitude is neither logically nor practically necessary. As a basic prin-

1. Emile Durkheim : *The Division of Labour in Society*, p 78.

2. *Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law*, Third Series, Vol XVII, 1935, p. 241 , XVII, 1936, p. 174.

ciple of penal reform we may accept the fact that in order to be effective punishment has chiefly to aim at reformation and that this aim can only be achieved by individual treatment of the law-breaker. Unfortunately, there are unconscious but real tendencies and traditions, which by their very nature work in a direction entirely opposed to reformation and individualisation. Economic exploitation of the prison has its origin in slavery and transportation of criminals.¹ Some hold that prison labour might represent a profitable source of revenue for the state.² But to-day the community no longer expects any financial benefits from the penal system and is content if the latter does not make great demands upon state revenues.

Especially with regard to prison reform we can summarise the progress of civilisation as mounting from the standpoint of pure deterrence to that of reformation, restricted first by the principle of less eligi-

1. See Abbot Emerson Smith, "The Transportation of Convicts to the American Colonies in the seventeenth century," *American Historical Review*, Vol 39, p 244.

2. Prof. Edward Jenks, *The New Jurisprudence*, p. 69, 1933

bility and later by that of non-superiority. More and more objective standards are applied to sociological ideas instead of vague psychological hypotheses. Even by the application of the principle of less eligibility the prisoner's isolation is broken down and he becomes a recognised member of human society.

Regarding prison diet and conveniences there has been a difference of opinion. In the nineteenth century it was held that the diet must be made an instrument of punishment. But towards the end of the century, England took the general standard of life of the population in fixing that of the prisoner.¹ Norway also emphasised that it is not the existence of the very poorest classes which should serve as a norm nor that of persons on the dole. Therefore, the conditions under which the prisoners exist can in no way be compared with those

1. See *Proceedings of the XIth International Penal And Penitentiary Congress held at Berlin, 1935*, pp. 459-460.

"In determining the conditions under which the prisoner must live the condition of living of the free population must be taken into consideration. They must therefore be as simple as possible but so provided that the prisoner retains his health and working capacity"

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enjoyed by the free population. Unlike the free man the prisoner has no possibility of finding compensation for moral or mental depression. It is only in a totalitarian atmosphere that the principle of Bentham may be adopted. "The prisoner's standard of life should not be superior to that of the poorest person as it would be contrary to the spirit of justice if the free and honest but unemployed citizen should be unable to enjoy at best the same standard of life as the prisoner."¹

The democratic view presented by the English reports is that the deprivation of liberty is in itself the greatest evil and the state can achieve at least in the case of a small number of prisoners what it is incapable of performing for the masses.² In England the preventive detention establishment has been made more comfortable

¹ See also Clara Leiser, "A Director of a Nazi Prison speaks out", *Journal of Criminal Law*, Vol 29, Sept-Oct 1938, p 345

"How is the food situation? According to existing instructions that can be quite decent, it depends on the interest, views and the purpose of the particular director, naturally, it must under no circumstances be better than that of the unemployed or the lowest paid worker outside"

² *Proceedings*, pp 152-153

than an ordinary prison without converting it into a Ritz. Prison labour in a totalitarian country, where there is no private enterprise and competition has been systematically utilised for the benefit of the State. Especially in the manufacture of armaments state needs are so urgent that even remand prisoners can be forcibly made to work.¹ But if we accept the principle of non-superiority the products of prison labour should never be permitted to disturb the general market and many trade unions even oppose giving technical education to the prisoner to enable him to earn a living outside.²

Economic destitution is responsible for a number of petty crimes and many prefer to go to prison than apply for the dole.³ "If you are out of work pinch a lady's handbag and the probation officer will find you a job." Even then it is only by creating better employment and spare time

1. Decree of the Minister of Justice, March 28, 1938.

2. Stanford Bates *Prison and Beyond*, p 270, 1936

3. Henriques : *Indiscretions of a Warden*, p 216.

"When I have had boys in prison whose cause for crime can definitely be traced to destitution and I have asked why they have not applied for relief rather than commit a felony, they have invariably replied, "Thank heaven, I have not stooped so low as that."

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conditions and by educating the youngster to a better understanding of his responsibilities that this question can be solved

Regarding discharged prisoners it is urged by some that they should be given not merely temporary financial relief but work giving some sort of security. Others, however, argue that wrong-doing cannot be a passport to preferential treatment¹ Social stigma that attaches to discharged prisoners and the undue curiosity of the press are obstacles to the reformation of the prisoner. One solution is to take a fidelity guarantee or in extreme cases to find work for ex-prisoners in state-managed factories.

The old law was content to make the punishment fit the crime, without caring for the personality, whereas the modern sociological school tries to adopt the treatment to individual needs. Therefore, both principles of less eligibility and non-superiority, do not entirely solve the problem because the individual treatment of the offender is ignored by taking into consideration only external requirements

¹ See *The Times* of September 15, 16, 17, 21, 23 and 27 and October 1, 7, 10, 1938

With the reformatory aspects of modern penal methods degrading penalties are utterly irreconcilable. The slogan "protection of society" has become dangerous because legislation has invaded every field of citizen's activity. Social and political penalties sometimes automatically bring about deprivation of the rights like eligibility for office, to have titles and academic degrees, the right to elect and be elected, etc.¹ Penal servitude bears a distinctly defamatory character. In English law at least in principle the degrading penalties do not follow the prisoner into his private life. But the most enlightened law is that of the Soviet Penal Code: "Measures of social defence shall not have as their object the infliction of physical suffering or personal humiliation." The question of retaliation or punishment does not arise.

The question becomes even more important when political prisoners are concerned. Political crimes are not in principle recognised as dishonourable. The continental *custodia honesta* and the English

1. See French Code Penal, Arts 8, 28, 84.



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division system provide for a special treatment of political prisoners. In Norway *custodia honesta* may be inflicted if the special circumstances of the crime permit it.¹ In England though the law does not recognise political crimes as a category in itself, the division system has been evolved to give privileged treatment for political prisoners.² In the first division there are the aristocrats of the prison world and in the second division there are the upper-middle classes.

At present the criminal courts have two methods that entail little or no social stigma, fine and the probation. To make the fine effective without the threat of a prison term in default is an old problem. Pre-war penologists argued for the substitution of labour, voluntary or involuntary.³ Germany after the war provided a legal basis by allowing the offender to pay off a fine by voluntary labour. It is only

1 See the Norwegian Penal Code of 1902, p. 24

2. See Sir Evelyn Ruggles-Brise *The English Prison System*, 1922, pp. 71 and 78.

English Prison To-day, edited by Stephen Hobhouse and A. Fenner Brockway, 1922, pp. 214-221.

3. Franz Von Laszt. *Strafrechtliche Aufsätze und Vorträge*, Vol 1, 1905, pp. 369 and 386.

in Soviet Russia that a bold approach is made to this problem. The minimum term of imprisonment that can legally be imposed is one year. Therefore, compulsory labour without deprivation of liberty has been substituted. In case of non-payment of the fine, at the rate of 100 rouble for one month of forced labour the prisoner must work in special workshops set apart for this category of offenders or in ordinary factories with other workmen. In Sweden, by the Act of 1937, the defaulter is not sent to prison and the fine is simply written off if it is clearly shown that he has honestly tried to pay. In some respects it is very difficult to maintain an equilibrium between prisoners of widely different social standards.

The problem of authorship in prison has been repeatedly discussed. Formerly, prisoners were allowed to have as many visitors as they wished and there was no regulation to prevent them from utilising the prison term to produce literary works, and from taking them out on being discharged. Bunyan is said to have written

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nine books during his first six years of imprisonment and Cobbett in the New Gate prison was allowed to contribute to journals.¹ A magnificent series of illustrious names have found the prison as their spiritual home. Bentham wrote "Take away paper and ink from an author and you take away the means of amusement and support." The present regulations preventing a prisoner from bringing out any writings, have been attacked by Sir John Squire,² R. M. Fox³ and others. It is supposed to destroy the social equality reigning in a penal institution.

The history of penal reform shows that it is not always the story of progress from hypothetical savagery of primitive people and tyrants to more enlightened methods.⁴ Political and penal progress do not necessarily go hand in hand. The penal

1 Jack Lindsay. *John Bunyan*, p 1490, 1938 Louis Melville *The Life And Letters of William Cobbett in England and America*, Vol. II, p 58, G D H. Cole: *Persons and Periods*, p. 150, 1938

2. *The Sunday Times* of September 19, 1937

3. *New Statesman And Nation*, p 81, January 21, 1939.

4. Hermann Mannheim *The Dilemma of Penal Reform*, 1939.

spread the gospel of universal peace and salvation were the ambassadors of a rich heritage. When India came into contact with the capitalistic countries and imperialism of the nineteenth century, it shrank to protect itself within its own shell. The loss of independence converted India to a nation of coolies and slaves. Indian labour was in great demand and therefore the indenture system was evolved. In extreme cases as in South Africa segregation, poll-tax and similar humiliating conditions were imposed. The supine attitude of the India government was responsible for the helplessness of the Indian colonists. Except in the United Kingdom, France, Eire, and Japan, Indians have been treated as undesirable aliens and even the elementary rights of citizenship have been denied.

In Afghanistan¹ Indian merchants have to report to the police constantly and cannot stay for more than 15 days without a police permit. No Indian can acquire property or stay for more than one year under any circumstances. Restrictions

1. See Pamphlet *Afghanistan's Threat to India's Trade*, 1938.

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have been imposed upon even visitors and every Indian trader has to vouch to the fact that he does not owe any debt in the country, by finding an Afghan's surety before leaving Afghanistan. In South Africa, which is a British dominion, in spite of the professions of British politicians that all the units of the British empire are equal, the conditions are mortifying. In the Cape province, Indians are given political and municipal franchise but in all other provinces, worst treatment is meted out, in the matter of franchise, emigration, trading license, etc.

In Transval, Indians are segregated and measures like the Mixed Marriage Bill and Asiatic Land Bill are passed to humiliate them.¹ There were also social distinctions debarring Indians from travelling except in particular class of carriages and excluding them from race course, cinemas etc. Even the accredited representative of the government of India like Sir Raza Ali, when he was India's agent-general, was refused to be served by lift boys.

1. See *The Latest Menace to South African Indians*, 1938.

system has become much more secure in recent times. The severity of the penal system increases with the homogeneity of the ruling class. Therefore, as Nehru says, there is absolutely no difficulty in introducing changes except one, the necessity of having a competent human staff, fully understanding and appreciating the new angle of vision.¹

1. Jawaharlal Nehru. *India and the World*, p 126.

CHAPTER IX

INDIANS ABROAD

India from time immemorial has sent out colonies to all the corners of the world. But it was a cultural imperialism free from the exploitation and humiliation of the alien people. In the very beginning of man's history, India established contacts with the great civilisations of Egypt, China, Babylonia, Persia, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, Mexico, and the Great Indian Archipelago. The Indians met foreigners neither as conquerors nor slaves but as missionaries of Indian culture.

The merchants who traded in wealth of arms and Buddhist missionaries who

In June 1939, the Asiatic Land and Trade Bill was the climax of the discriminatory legislation. It negates the work of Gandhi. Even while a Commission was being appointed to investigate the alleged penetration of Indians into Durban, the government gave expression to the view that it was prepared to take all possible measures to prevent such penetration into predominantly European areas. Hertzog and Malan made their intentions quite clear and would have provoked untoward incidents, had not the war intervened and Smuts assumed the government.

In Kenya, as Polak says "there is no excuse for anti-Indian attitude so prevalent in East Africa." Even Sir John Kirk before the Sanderson Committee said that but for Indians the British would not be there now. Churchill also attests to the fact that the Sikh soldier and the Indian trader has been responsible for the development of East Africa. Yet Indians are denied ownership and occupation of agricultural land in the Highlands of Kenya.

In the West Indies, the Tyson Report

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of May 1939 makes it clear that the lot of Indians is unenviable. Especially in Jamaica, British Guiana and Trinidad the position of the Indians is very serious. It was Indian labour that converted swamps into fertile fields, worked the mines and in every way helped to civilise the country. But Indian labour is not protected whereas Britain is prepared to colonise the Jews in British Guiana. In Trinidad the treatment is so scandalous that Indian marriages are not recognised as legal. Even custom and personal laws are not recognised. In Canada, Australia and New Zealand Indians are not encouraged to emigrate.

In Burma the anti-Indian feeling has been fomented since its separation in 1937. It was the wealth and labour of India that made Burma what it is to-day. But the Burma government has almost expropriated the Chetty landlords. Serious riots broke out in July 1938 and the Brand Commission which investigated this question reported that 200 Indians were killed, 750 injured and Rs. 56 lakhs worth of property was destroyed. Certain

sections of Burmese deliberately carried on propaganda, picketed Indian shops and were in no way prevented by the government. No adequate compensation has been paid.¹

In Ceylon² the economic structure is entirely due to Indian labour, capital and enterprise. But the Ceylon government has erected a barrier against Indians by excluding them from the Ceylon Civil Service, disenfranchising 75 per cent. of the Indians and not recognising Indian medical degrees. In 1934 an ordinance was promulgated to exclude domiciled Indians from occupying Crown lands. By other enactments Ceylon imposed a heavy duty on Indian products like ghee, eggs, vegetables, etc. In 1935 Indian paddy imports were further restricted. In 1936-37 the

1. The Indo-Burma Agreement has been condemned as a matter of deep humiliation and inequity, contrary to the terms of the Government of Burma Act. The Indian Agent in Burma has put forward the plea that the Indian problem in Burma was really one for Burma and not for India. The Indians being a minority in Burma, their standing was determined not by nationality, but by domicile.

2. The Indo-Ceylon talks suspended in November 1940, were resumed by the Indo-Ceylon Delegation consisting of Sir Gurja Shankar Bajpai, Sir Mirza Ismail, Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Shastri, and Mr. T. G. Rutherford. The talks ended on September 22, 1941 with no tangible results (*Indo-Ceylon Crisis* by K. Natesa Aiyar) 1941.

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Village Communities Ordinance excluded Indian labourers completely from the village franchise.

Ceylon employs about half a million Indian labourers in the estates whereas a large population of Sinhalese workers who are non-resident are entitled to vote. In 1938-39 the Ceylon government launched a policy to expel all the daily paid labourers engaged after 1934 and repatriate those who had put in more than five years service. By 1939 more than 1,000 employees had been sent back by threats of dismissal and many labourers were encouraged to go back to their own country. In December 1934, the government of India were prepared to receive a delegation from Ceylon but the Ceylon government went on with its schemes and therefore the government of India could not negotiate with them. Ceylon has threatened to impose more stringent measures against Indians by requiring every non-Ceylonese to have an identification card with finger prints and such persons should report to the police monthly. They will not be allowed to stay for more

than three months in Ceylon if they want to carry on business or any other profession.¹

Nehru visited Ceylon and pointed out that Indians could never misbehave so long as they conformed to the ideals of the Congress.² 'The Congress was big and powerful enough not to be frightened by any Ceylonese action. India's prestige and dignity were the vital questions. Ceylon was not necessary for India but India was necessary for Ceylon. Nationalism so long as it pushed man on to freedom was good but it was an evil if it tended to push man over and then dominate others. Nehru does not want Indians to go to countries where they are not wanted. He says, "I am an Indian. I am proud to be one. I cannot tolerate a single hair of an Indian being touched by any one. I would sooner see an Indian crushed to atoms than that he should submit to indignities and humiliations. I do not want therefore Indians to go to any place where they are not wanted. Where they go, let them go with goodwill and with the goodwill of the people of that place."³

1. Note on the *Flight of Indians in Ceylon*, 1939.

2. *The Hindu*, July 21, 1939.

3. *The Hindu*, July 18, 1939

CHAPTER X

INTERNATIONALISM AND WORLD OUTLOOK

Nehru is essentially an internationalist and the prospect of being in tune with the masses and with world forces exhilarate him to a feeling that he is the agent of historic destiny.¹ His mind ranges throughout the world and from his point of view all the evils of the world are mainly due to capitalism and imperialism. Capitalism produces fascism and its imperialist counterpart though in different degrees and in various countries, according to national characteristics, economic and political condi-

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, Presidential Address to the Lucknow Congress, 1936.

tions. Fascism and imperialism are essentially the same, supporting the forces of reaction in spite of their inherent contradiction.

Regarding nationalism he says that the western type differs from nationalism in the east. 'The fascist countries have not the historical urge for freedom and in India as in the rest of the world these forces cannot be ignored nor Indian problem isolated from other world problems. India is primarily concerned with imperialism, the oldest and the most powerful reactionary force in the world.

The failure of capitalism was shown in the economic crisis when the problem of distribution and not production had to be faced. To find a solution for the proper distribution of wealth and purchasing power, socialism alone can put an end to the basic inequalities and evolve a scientific system.¹

The dictators promised a healthier social equilibrium but in order to increase their strong-hold over every aspect of life they have turned to war, to divert the attention

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, *India and the World*, p. 58.

of their people from their misery.¹ In their contempt for democracy they now listen to demogogy. The state is considered the source, the maker of the law and at the same time above law. This neodespotism cannot even be called authoritarian.²

The Corporate state in the economic sphere controls production of corporations which are themselves units of the political constitution. Therefore in its very essence corporatism is irreconcilable with democracy. The problem of liberty is thus faced by this system. In the primary unions the workers can discuss among themselves their problems and when once they enter the

1. Prof S Srikantha Sastri in his *Introduction to Constituent Assembly and Indian Federation* says "To be feared is better than to be loved and hence the resort to insane cruelty—smutting off one by one the tallest of the poppy-heads. But there are far potent forces let loose in the world that make for the instability of dictatorships. No amount of repression and distraction of men's mind, no fomenting of class hatreds, no hypnotisation and intoxication can bring about a stable society or lasting prosperity."

2. *For Democracy*, (edited by the "People Freedom" group), p 163-172. Serpieri, *Problema della Economia Liberale*, 1930, p. 58.

"Facism absolutely denies the individual as an element preceeding the state and independent of it and his pretended natural rights including that of property", Ugo Spiriti, *La Critica della Economia Liberale*, 1930, p 97. He says that corporative system achieves "the interpenetration and absolute identification of the individual's will and initiative with the supreme ends of the state."

system and the higher grades, they have to delegate their powers to the higher grades of the organisation. The function of the state is to watch over institutions, reform and create them as the case may be.¹

Nehru has pointed out that even Great Britain, France and other countries are not free from this fascist tendency. He says "The British, it is well known, have a remarkable capacity for combining their moral instinct with their self-interest. That is perhaps not unnatural but it is remarkable how some of our own countrymen have been taken in by this unctuous and hypocritical attitude!"² In Britain the relation between the Trade Union, employers and the state constitutes a favourable element for the building up of a fascist order. After the General Strike in

1. Paul Chanson, *Les droits du travailleur et le corporatisme*, Mussolini's speech of November 10, 1934, inaugurating the 22 Corporations (Corriers della sera, November 11, 1934). He declared that the corporative system has two objectives—"to achieve" a higher social justice for all the Italian people "and to strengthen Italy "for expansion in the world". Carman Haider, *Capital and Labour under Fascism*, p. 25, 1930; Gaetano Salvemini, *Under the Axe of Fascism*, p. 392, 1936; "He who would think with his own brain and not with that of the big businessmen, has more than one reason for assuming that the Fascist experiment indicates how the problem must not be solved, not only out of an elementary respect for human dignity, but because it is no solution at all."

2. Jawaharlal Nehru, *India and the World* p. 62.



1926 labour accepted restrictions on the right to strike. A National Economic Council on a basis of equal representation was erected. Thus a preliminary step towards corporatism has been taken entirely through private initiative¹ On the outbreak of the war, Britain took the credit for becoming totalitarian overnight. Bernard Shaw said that it shows how democracy would voluntarily adapt itself to a war economy without the least delay. But it only reveals the fact that the inherent totalitarian tendencies were merely put into practice under the guise of war emergencies.

In the United States where Roosevelt came to power in 1932 he had to fight the depression and he immediately suggested the institution of professional organisation on a corporative basis to combat unemployment, remedy under-consumption and regulate production by suppressing competition. In 1933 the National Industrial Recovery Act created the National Recovery Administration. The employers could organise themselves contrary to the deep-

1. *For Democracy*, pp. 185-209

rooted liberalism of the American middle-classes. Roosevelt's experiment has continued in spite of much opposition and during the three terms he has practically converted the U S A into a corporative organisation.

In France the Popular Front government tried the co-operative remedy but was opposed by the communist section. In 1936, a social legislation provided for compulsory conciliation and arbitration. The law made collective agreements compulsory and collective law has been substituted for individual rights, thus overthrowing one of the idols of liberalism. Therefore, when France collapsed in the War, Petain government on the Nazi model was the logical result of this corporative tendency¹

Nehru is right in saying that on the world stage fascism though it might assume different aspects and come into conflict on a

1 *The Hindu*, December, 7, 1940. See also Victor Griffuelhe's *L'action syndicaliste*, 1908, Hubert Lagardelle's *Le Socialisme Ouvrier*, p. 340, Roger Soltau's *French Political Thought in the 19th Century*, 1931, Louis Lerine, *Syndicalism in France*, 1913, Chs. V, VI, VIII, George Sorel, *Reflexions sur la Violence* 5th edition, 1921. El. Sol (Madrid) January 10, 1930. This issue published the full text of the Popular Front Programme.

It is estimated that in Italy, 1,002 collective contracts of national and inter-provincial applications and 9,164, provincial contracts have been concluded since 1927.

nationalist basis with some of its own types ultimately has to face communism. As fascism has spread in other countries it has become clear that it is not peculiar to Italy or Germany. By its intense and aggressive nationalism it goes against the world tendency towards interdependence, aggravates the causes created by the collapse of capitalism and finally by engendering national friction has led to war.¹

Nehru's travels in China and Spain have confirmed his diagnosis. He has pointed out that fascist state is a great menace both to France and Britain. The vital arteries Gibraltar, the Mediterranean and Suez Canal would be cut. Therefore, he urged that at least from the point of view of self-interest, Britain and France should help the Spanish government. But Britain evolved a scheme of non-intervention, a supreme farce of our time. Germany and Italy though members of the non-intervention committee openly helped the rebels. The French government closed the

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glances of World History*, p. 826, 1939.

Pyrranese frontier and Chamberlain actually defended Franco's action.¹

Though fascism in the guise of Franco's syndicalism has won the victory, Nehru is optimistic enough to hope that republican Spain will rise up again. To him Spain and Czechoslovakia represent precious values in life, for what he laboured in India. He says "If I deserted them what could I cherish in India. For what kind of freedom do we struggle here."²

1. *Ibid*, p 956

2 Jawaharlal Nehru, *China, Spain and the War*. Also R Ramos Oliveria, *The Drama of Spain, 1931-1936*. W. Horsfall Carter, "Spain To-day," *The Listener*, 1936, Vol XV, pp. 797-799, 826; Peck, *The Spanish Tragedy*; Vera M Dean "European Diplomacy in the Spanish Crisis," *Foreign Policy Reports*, December, 1, 1936, pp. 224, 226; Articles by Walter Duranty in *New York Times*, September 1, 2, 1936; Charles A. Thomson, "Spain--Issues Behind the Conflict" *Foreign Policy Reports*, January 1, 1937, pp 249, 250

The Spanish Embassy in Paris asserted that Italian force dominated the Balearic Islands. It was reported that Italian infantry had been landed, 112 Italian bombers and pursuit planes were ready to attack Barcelona, and 8 Italian submarines were prepared to leave them there at Genoa, to aid the Rebels. *The Times* (London) October 28, 1936, "Only foreign aid has made the Rebel success to day possible" *New York Times*, October 20, 1936, Walter Duranty reported "The Moore, with curved knives, massacred, raped, and looted in Tudavre—I talked with refugees and what they said was dreadful" *New York Times*, September 13, 1936

"The Rebels were believed to be financing their campaign with credits from Germany and Italy. Those from the former were reported to total \$180,000,000" *New York Times*, January 10, 1937

In the case of Abyssinia, he points out, under the pressure of Britain and France economic sanctions were not imposed. Essential materials for the war like oil, iron, steel and coal were not included in the sanctions list. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company supplied Italy with oil and when the United States of America suggested an embargo on it, Britain refused. Therefore, Italy though a little inconvenienced could conquer Abyssinia.¹

In China, Britain was following a policy of appeasing Japan. Again and again Japan has made quite clear her intentions. In Manchuko affairs, Britain sacrificed enormous prestige. When the Japanese imposed humiliating restrictions upon 5th British residents in Hongkong, Shanghai and elsewhere she meekly accepted all the insults because it did not want to go against Berlin-Rome-Tokyo-Axis. Japan declared that it has a divine mission in Asia and this is a clear threat to the British possessions. Britain in order not to offend Japan has stigmatised the Chinese struggle as Communistic.

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, p. 958
1939

Nehru therefore says that the British government has throughout played a reactionary role in Asia, Africa and Europe. She has given encouragement to Nazism and Fascism even endangering the security of the British empire.

But in spite of all those obstacles a new China is rising. It has achieved a unity that is astonishing and inspiring. It is not merely unity in defence but also in the world of reconstruction. Behind the war front there are vast schemes for industrialization and co-operation.¹ Nehru visited China as the guest of Marshal Chiang Kai-shek and saw with his own eyes the magnificent spirit of the Chinese. Marshal Chiang sent a Chinese good-will mission and in a personal letter he wrote "I am firmly convinced that the future of the world depends on the outcome of the united struggle of our Asiatic peoples. In view of the ever increasing Japanese ambition and the momentous world changes, we, in order to safeguard liberty

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, *China, Spain and the War*. See also Edgar Ansel Mowrer, *Mowrer in China*, pp. 184-185, 1938, George Sokolsky, *The Tinder Box of Asia*, 1932, Epstein, *The People's War*.

and freedom must first of all bring the chief perturber of peace to account 1942.”¹

Regarding the events in Europe Nehru has pointed out that even Russia in its aggression against Finland is losing sight of its idealism. Pure opportunism divorced from moral principles cannot take any country far. Russia is not afraid of Finland but of the possibility of Finland being used to attack her. The British and French imperialisms hate and distrust Russia far more than Nazism. Whatever may be the value of Russian foreign policy, the Russian experiment in spite of undesirable features is still the hope of the common man.²

1 *The Hindu*, December 17, 1940

2 *Ibid*

CHAPTER XI

INDIA AND THE WAR

The Congress, ten years before the outbreak of the present conflict, by repeated resolutions, made its policy quite clear that India cannot be dragged into any war without consulting the wishes of Indians. When on September 3, 1939, India was declared as belligerent country by a Proclamation of the Viceroy, the Congress Working Committee on September 14, demanded a statement of the war aims by the British government. The All-India Congress Committee on October 10, asserted that India must be declared an independent nation and immediate application must be given to this status. Gandhi was for giving unconditional



support provided the war aims were declared. Conversations were held between the Viceroy and many Indian leaders in September and October and on October 17, the Viceroy said that the details of war aims could be formulated only towards the end of the war.

As regards India, Dominion status was the aim and after the war His Majesty's government would enter into conversations with the representatives of several communities, parties and interests in the country and with the princes, for the purpose of framing such modifications in the Act of 1935 as might be seem desirable. On October 22, the Working Committee vehemently rejected this offer as nothing but reiteration of the old imperialist policy. Therefore, the Congress could not possibly give any support and the Congress ministers were called upon to resign.

On October 26, Sir Samuel Hoare again repeated the goal as Dominion status "as soon as possible." The Viceroy suggested that the Congress and the Muslim League should participate in the central government as members of the Viceroy's council. The

Congress could not accept this and the ministers resigned. On November 23 the Working Committee reiterated the demand for independence and constituent assembly on the basis of adult suffrage. On January 26, 1940, celebrating the Independence Day, the Working Committee called for special preparation for the coming struggle.

At Ramgarh in March the foundation of the Civil Disobedience was laid. The Congress did not want to bring matters to a crisis and therefore the Working Committee was prepared to offer co-operation in the war effort provided a fully representative national government was formed at the centre. The British government rejected the offer because in the midst of war, an element of full responsibility could not be given. On August 8, the Viceroy again mentioned the goal of Dominion status and promised to establish in June the War Advisory Council. But this was no substitute to national government and the deadlock became perfect. The Congress in September declared launching of civil disobedience. It did not want to embarrass

the government but insisted on the right of free speech, on the ground that India had been made a belligerent without its consent and it was therefore necessary to show to the world that her war effort was not voluntary.

Even Tej Bahadur Sapru says "the mere addition of a few members to the Executive Council will never do. If India is to be a full-fledged Dominion after the war why hesitate to say so in words that admit no doubt, and why also not do something now as an earnest of the things to come even though it may not be perfect in every respect?"¹

Rejecting the argument that the satyagrahis should be treated as the conscientious objecters in the United Kingdom, Gandhi said that the vast majority of the people in India make no "distinction between Nazism and double-autocracy that rules in India." On October 13, the Working Committee formally approved Gandhi's plan of campaign. Gandhi selected Vinoba Bhave

¹ Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in an article in *The Twentieth Century* 1940

as the first satyagrahi and he was arrested on October 21. The next honour fell upon Nehru, who was arrested in October 31, for his speech at Gorakhpur and sentenced to four years rigorous imprisonment.

Nehru in a message to the *News Chronicle*¹ makes the position of the Congress clear. To India with her thirst for freedom and horror of war the question is of paramount importance. India condemned the aggression in Manchuria, Abyssinia, and Czechoslovakia and was deeply distressed at the events in Spain and the cruel destruction of Poland. India will therefore gladly throw her resources for a new order of peace and freedom. The Congress insisted that the British government should make a clear statement of war and peace aims and in particular show how they apply to India. 'There was a fine opportunity for ending the hostility between England and India.' The first step therefore in order to prove Britain's sincerity is a declaration of India's freedom. It will be a tragedy for all of us if the deep significance of this offer is not appreciated.

1. *The Hindu*, October 7, 1939.

Zetland and the Viceroy made the offer of another R. T. C. and L. S. Amery urges us to think of India first. This reminder is not necessary. But even the unity of India cannot be purchased at the cost of India's freedom. England stands for self-determination, the proof of that should be India. Says Nehru, "I can well understand the opposition of the British government to the idea of a constituent assembly because such assembly necessarily puts an end to British imperialism"¹ India must act in a consciousness of her strength.

The *New Statesman* put the matter in a nutshell when it said "if we give India liberty we shall win the leadership of all the free people. But if we must have a rebel India with coercion, will any one in Europe believe that we are fighting for democracy?"²

1 *The Hindu*, December 15, 1939

2 *The Nation* wrote "In the U.S.A. much of the sympathy and support which Britain now receives will be forfeited if it brutally represses India. The British Government will hardly be prepared to pay the price of such a struggle"

The New Republic stigmatises the Viceroy's statement as "a blunder of a magnitude of a crime all the more, so as India will be asked to give men and money on an heroic scale the Viceroy's words will play into the hands of the Germans who argue that this is not a war of ideologies but of empires"

Ludwig Lore writes in *New York Post* "In the end British will have to give Indians what they want. Then it will be a

Even in Britain the demand for the statement of war aims is growing. Wickham Steed quotes the Prime Minister's statement of October 12, 1939, that Britain is not aiming only at victory but rather looking beyond it, to the laying of a foundation of a better international system which will mean that war is not to be the inevitable lot of every succeeding generation. The peace which we have determined to secure must be a real peace and not an uneasy truce interrupted by constant alarms and repeated threats. Wickham Steed says "it is no wonder that other countries remember our record during the past eight years of national government and do not fully believe in our professions. The Prime Minister came nearer the mark when he said it is not alone the freedom of

reluctant concession wrung from them by the strength of 350 million Indians. How much wiser to come to terms now! Certainly it would improve England's influence and standing not only in India, but before the democratic people in other parts of the world as well."

The Hearst Chicago papers declared: "If India's demand for self-rule does not succeed in the near future, heaven help India, Britain and the world."

News Letter, edited by King Hall, M.P., remarks: "There is a feeling among many members of all parties in the House that the issue which has arisen now in India is unreal and that a way can and must be found to overcome the difficulties which prevent India from co-operating in an united manner with Great Britain in the struggle against Nazism."

small nations that is at stake. There is also in jeopardy the peaceful existence of Great Britain, Dominions India, France and indeed of all freedom-loving countries."¹

After the war there will be deep changes inevitably and all nations will have their part to play. In the last war many people believed that they were fighting for Belgium and France. Now Britain declares that she is fighting for the freedom of small nations. But Britain has still the same objection to any real limitation of her sovereignty.² What chance can there be of finding a better international system on such a basis? "As a war aim deliberately chosen and solemnly proclaimed a federation of free peoples would fire the imagination of the world and endow the allied cause with a high moral sanction."

1. Wickham Steed, *Our War Aims*, p 189 "As the war goes on, our people and the people of France may need an ideal, a faith more positive and sustaining than the negative purpose of destroying Hitlerism. It may turn to be an indispensable condition of real victory, even of military victory. This truth is already grasped by many minds amongst us." Again he pertinently observes "To define them now requires constructive imagination, the kind of imagination of which our present war cabinet has given far too little proof"

2. Wickham Steed, *Our War Aims*, p 46

Churchill speaking on the Atlantic Charter thinks only of the extension of sovereignty and national life and mere adjustments of territorial boundaries (September 1941)

forward regarding a federation of democracies as a beginning for a world federation. Clarence Streit's proposal of a union of democracies has received wide publicity.¹ Streit contends that the great republics can be organised without sacrificing their national status, so that ultimately the union can spread peacefully as other nations grow ripe for it. He recommends that America, Britain, the Dominions, the Netherlands, Swiss Federation, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland should be organised into a North Atlantic Union.² These fifteen democracies owning almost half the earth, having mastery of the sea, governing half of mankind would be so powerful that Germany, Italy and Japan could not dream of attacking them. Russia is to be excluded because she allows no individual freedom. India is politically inexperienced and therefore it prevents the western union.³ This union is to have five main rights ; the right

1 Clarence Streit, *Union Now*, 1940

2 *Ibid.*, pp 22-23

3 *Ibid.*, p 240 "Whatever we may wish we must recognise that India's politically inexperienced millions cannot at first be included in the Union on the same population basis as the Western democracies."

to grant citizenship, to make peace and war, to regulate inter-state and foreign trade, to govern inter-statal communication service and to organise a defence force

The constitution of the union should be bicameral, one house based completely on population and the other modifying this principle of equal men in favour of equal states. There should be one deputy for every million men in the House of Deputies. In the Senate to safeguard the people of the union against losing freedom by over-centralisation there should be two senators to every self-governing nation of 25 million population. The executive must possess stability by a combination of parliamentary and presidential system

Streit thinks that such a union will be more effective than a League of Nations because it can act swiftly and enforce decisions against law-breakers. It can eliminate inter-state wars because the constituent states have delegated that power to the union. The union would enjoy the monopoly of such essential war materials as rubber, nickel, iron, oil, gold and credit.

Except for police purposes, armaments would be necessary as a temporary precaution against dictatorships. Even in these totalitarian countries the existence of a democratic union would produce revolts against autoeracy and with each revolution the union would be strengthened. Since these democracies control two thirds of the world's trade, effective economic sanctions could be imposed upon aggressive nations. It can speed up communications and can reduce unemployment by free trade, stabilizing money, lowering costs, reducing armaments, guaranteeing political security, eliminating war danger, diverting into healthy channels the billions being wasted, cheapening and widening communications, making the worker and his product more mobile, restoring confidence and opening vast new enterprises.

Streit's plan has been attacked as unnecessarily advocating unification than union. He has not realised that federation is opposed no less to unity than to disunion. Even elementary knowledge of sovereignty, rule of law, statehood and democracy would

show that a federal union standardized on the American model is a pious wish. The present democracies sticking to state sovereignty cannot so easily be dissolved. The process of history hardly suggests that it is going to reverse itself in an instant. Streit overlooks in his enthusiasm for a constitutional clean-sweep the necessity for immediate sweep-up of the economic debris.¹

"Union Now without radical changes is Union No How." The American model cannot inspire enthusiasm because America itself has not solved the racial problem.² The American constitution was evolved in a pre-industrial era. The Union is nothing but large-scale collectivism involving a degree of regimentation and bureaucracy hardly distinguishable from fascism. H. G. Wells has indicated it as "pseudo-practical short-sightedness." Streit's formula is based upon

1 M. Channing-Pearce, editor *Federal Union*, see Ch. The Meaning of Federation, Edward Mousley, "But the recommendation that the way of salvation is for existing governments to pass wholesale into the crucible whereupon the peoples into which the states would then be dissolved should immediately adopt federal union on the American model, is express journalism or to address the Almighty."

2 The nineteen amendments since 1787 have shown no real advance in American Federal ideas.

out-moded theories of law, Montesquieu and Burke

America has taken only the first step towards a federal union and has not emerged beyond nationalism. The task of federation in the international sphere starts where American Union ended. Mere consolidation of colonies, languages, political faiths and economic interests on a national basis is a potential danger to the world. The meaning of federation must expand in scope as it meets new problems of economic planning and war menace.

Any such federation must be based on socialism if it should endure. Any kind of clarification if it fails to issue in a socialistic and federated world order would betray the hope of mankind. Piece-meal unification either stage by stage or function by function imposed by the existing capitalist nations and sovereign governments can never lead to a 'democratic federal union.

The political aim of the decent socialist is to secure a full and happy life for the ordinary human being. According to him the time has come when economic and

political individualism should be destroyed, because it has produced insecurity, misery and war. Any other scheme of political union may even become the instrument of reaction to restore the failing power of capitalism and fascism.

Streit's union, therefore, seems to be directed against Russia, India and Asia generally. It would create a super-empire which would strangle the colonial people and the cause of freedom in India and Africa would be gravely hampered. To a socialist the present war is but a civil war between two imperialisms.¹ To eliminate war, the federal union must revise the conception of sovereignty in the state. It must kindle the imagination and capture the loyalty of every nation. The collapse of culture and civilization can be prevented only by a democratic federation of people loyal to the idea of universal brotherhood. Federal union will be a will-o'-the-wisp unless it is moderately conceived as the international political part of a much more comprehensive

¹ Storm Jameson says "The war, in effect a civil war, will decide the issue between civilisation and anarchy."

and revolutionary plan of world order. Imperialism is the main obstacle. It can be defined as a process of expansion on the part of the highly industrialized countries of the world carried out by means of direct or indirect domination in order to increase the political, economic or military power of these states.

British statesmen have recently tried to refute the idea that imperialism is no longer the characteristic of the British Commonwealth. But the simple test is the case of India. Nehru says that no progressive union has a chance of survival to-day without the inclusion of the Soviet, China and India. Nor can a real union be formed except on the basis of the ending of imperialism. Otherwise the union becomes one of the imperialist powers for the protection of her vested interests.¹ Prof. Keeton attacks Strick's plan because he underestimates the significance of what is happening in Asia.

1 A. A. Milne observes: "This war seems to be a civil war, a war of ideas, a revolt, in which Germans are fighting on our side, or we on theirs, against an intolerable form of government."

Sir John Boyd: "The present conflict, is like a general election complicated by a series of civil wars."

to-day¹ If India is excluded she might prefer to join an Asiatic federation and create a new order in Asia India has greater cultural affinity with China, Siam, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya States and the Philippines than with the west

The Indian National Congress has made its attitude towards international questions clear in the statement of the Working Committee on the issue of the war "If the war is to defend the *status quo* of imperialist possessions, colonies, vested interests and privileges then India can have nothing to do with it If however, the issue is democracy and a new world order based on democracy then India is intensely interested in it." Therefore, the Congress regards the present war, a war of conflicting imperialisms²

1 *Federal Union*, Editor, Channing-Pearce, see *China Federation and India* by Prof G W Kerton

2 What is Imperialism? It is the policy of aggression upon other countries by means of political force We, the wronged races must first recover our position of national freedom and equality before we are fit to discuss cosmopolitanism

Sun Yat Sen (1921)

British "imperialism" vanished from the earth with the statute of Westminster This present war is no more a war of "imperialisms" than it is a fight between dinosaurs

H G Wells, Guide to the New World, P 88.

But see *Constituent Assembly and Indian Federation*, p 79 ff
Imperialism is the period of an increasing oppression of

into which India has been dragged without any joint consultations. It has condemned aggression on every occasion and its attitude towards Italy and Germany has been made quite clear by Nehru's refusal to meet the Duce,¹ and by C. Rajagopalachari, who refused to permit Italian planes flying over his province even though the government of India had accorded permission.

The Congress has recognised long ago what thinking persons all over the world are slowly appreciating, that international relations are not a sphere of social behaviour which can be isolated nor can the evils be cured by devising intricate state machinery but that democracy and world peace are but aspects of a way of life.

Any union must be on a basis of equality, on a common declaration of the Rights of Man, accepting India's freedom to choose

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the nations of the whole world by a handful of "great" nations, the struggle for a socialist international revolution against imperialism is therefore impossible without the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination. "No people oppressing other peoples can be free" (Marx and Engels). No proletarian reconciling itself to the least violation by "its" nation of the rights of other nations can be socialist."

Lenin, Socialism and War, 1916.

1 Edward Thompson, *Enlist India for Freedom* p. 10, 1940.

its own destiny. The ultimate aim of humanity is unity in plurality and not plurality in unity. Then only law and morality can be synthesised.¹ The federal idea is the spirit of the pragmatic inter-dependence of the pluralistic universe.²

Sovereignty, that "dusty desert of abstractions," must not be interpreted as comprising full legislation and administrative power, but, in a wider sense, as regards certain matters only. In that case, the member states of a federation can enjoy sovereignty.³

The principle of federation can be extended to world communities when there would be an international law on the basis of col-

1 Prof Kerton says "The attitude of the Congress to international questions has been consistent, clear and co-operative."

2 Gutwitsch Otto von Guericke, *als Rechtsphilosoph* Jogo Band XI, 1922 Heft 1, pp 112-113, Otto von Guericke • *Das deutsche genossenschaftstheorie* Vol II, p 42, Vol III, pp 186-664

Die Genossenschaftstheorie pp 74, 338 The final goal by which we measure the ethical justification of both general and individual purposes is the harmonious agreement of both

3 William James, *Pluralistic Universe*, p 332 The pluralistic universe is like this, more like a federal republic than like an empire or a kingdom. However much may be collected however much may report itself as present at any effective centre of consciousness or action, something else is self-governed and absent and unmediated to unity. The basic spirit of federation is represented by this remarkable sentence

lectivity. The present actual and theoretical obstacle to the formation of the world community is the continued existence of the conception of absolute state sovereignty.¹ Only by means of a world-embracing socialist common-wealth the possibility of a world state comes within the range of practical politics.

As Nehru says, democracy, the Rights of Man² and social justice are the pillars of world peace. World peace can be achieved only by a philosophy and ethics embodying the technique of *satyagraha*. India because

1 Jellinek, *Allgemeine staatslehre*, p. 769, James Bryce, *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*, 1901 Vol. II, p. 504. Sovereignty, that dusty desert of abstractions through which successive generations of political philosophers have thought it necessary to lead their disciples.

2 H. G. Wells whose latest intellectual pastime seems to be the advocacy of what he calls the Declaration of the Rights of Man or the Sankey Declaration, reveals the peculiarly British quality of self-righteousness and the typically occidental mentality. Though he is profuse in his professions of being a citizen of the world, "We British," "The Council of Civil Liberties for the most part of dusky complexion" and such expressions in his "Guide to the New World" (P. 17, p. 119) reveal that Mr. Wells has not really undergone any mental development since he wrote in *The Fate of the Homo Sapiens* "Indians are destined to play only a secondary and supporting role in any unification of human affairs that is achieved" (p. 247). His opinion about India not being a nation, ambiguous patriots mostly in Bengal, a vast sub-continent which has nothing new, nothing fresh, nothing really Indian at all to contribute to the world problem may have come out of the mouths of reactionaries like Amery or Jinnah. When Gandhi in his reply to Wells

of her past history and spiritual heritage is the brightest hope of mankind. Through centuries of evolution, experimentation, suffering and sacrifice, India has produced as a climax of the wisdom of ages, a great soul. Mahatma Gandhi, who is the prophet of a liberated life for all mankind, by virtue of his purity, holiness and heroism

Universal peace and brotherhood are the cardinal tenets of Gandhi. He has released a tremendous force which can transform a selfish and war-ridden world to serve truth and supreme universal spirit. Nothing better has ever been taught or proved by experience since the world first began, than the gospel of Ahimsa !

replied pertinently that the Declaration of the Rights of Man begins at the wrong end instead of beginning with a charter of the Duties of Man. Wells seeks to dismiss a profound truth as naive egotism and exhibitionism. Nehru's reply to Wells as to how the Sankey Declaration is going to be given effect to evokes in Wells a taunt that Nehru "marches along in the Communist party blinkers to futility" (*Guide to the New World* Ch XXXVII "India a Nation"). What Wells and others who are busy with schemes of New World Orders should realise is that *Duty (Dharma)* individual and social is of primary importance and rights accrue as a matter of logical necessity provided that the real education of the individual based on a perfect conception of Duty (*dharma*) is first taken up.

POSTSCRIPT

The increased tempo of international events since the starting of the Satyagraha movement by Gandhu has resulted in a profound transformation of the political situation in India. The British Government had to make a general jail delivery of all the Satyagrahis and the detenus. Under the stress of events Churchill committed the empire to the so-called Atlantic Charter,¹ but as to its applicability to India and Burma he asserted that the Eight Point Declaration was primarily concerned with "the extension of the sovereignty, self-government and national life of the States and Nations of Europe now under Nazi yoke. This is quite a separate problem from the the progressive evolution of self-governing institutions in regions whose peoples owe allegiance to the British Crown." In fact the August "Offer" anticipated the wisdom of the Atlantic Charter. But evidently it was necessary to make "India a signatory"

1. Mr H. G. Wells indicts the Atlantic Charter as "a gracefully arranged loop-holes"

POSTSCRIPT

to the declaration along with twenty-three United Nations ' to appease American sentiment. Japan's entry into the war, the loss of the valuable strategic bases in the Pacific, the debacle at Hongkong and Singapore, the invasion of Burma the reverses in Africa and in the Atlantic have followed in such startling succession that India is no longer the primary concern of the British only but of world-politics. The recent visit to India of the illustrious Chinese leader Chiang Kai-Shek and his grave warning to Britain to give the people of India real political power the Non-Party Conference presided over by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru who plainly asserted that Britain has lost the moral support of India, may result in some minor changes like the Indianisation of the Viceroy's Executive Council, a place of India in the Allies War Council and partial restoration of popular provincial government. But Japan's hordes are on the frontiers. Sapru has expressed his opinion that Britain has been callously indifferent and criminally negligent of the task of protecting India. On the analogy of events

in the Far East, India should be prepared for any eventuality if the command of Indian Ocean has been lost and evacuation takes place, placing the burden of the defence of India on Indians themselves, disarmed as they are. Even now, when the Eastern situation is so critical, Nehru and the Congress have asserted their capacity to protect the country against all Imperialisms, German, Japanese *or any other*. Declaration of Indian independence, here and now, the right to elect a popular government on the basis of a constituent assembly, the repeal of the Arms Act and the manufacture of all essential war material, full control over the defence and finance, the repudiation of the so-called treaties with the Indian States and of unjust international obligations--these alone can secure the wholehearted co-operation of India. The World War I succumbed to the Fourteen Points of Wilson, the World War II may succumb to the Eight Points of Churchill and Roosevelt, and sow the seed for new wars. No World Order will be worth the name as long as India continues to be in a subordinate position in the British "Commonwealth."

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